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ABSTRACT

Based on the experiences of classroom teachers of theatre, the elective dramatics course described in this guide is designed to enhance ninth grade students' aesthetic awareness, social development, intellectual growth, and technical knowledge. Following a brief course description and overview, the guide presents complete instructions for seven units of study covering (1) theatre games, (2) preproduction tips, (3) pantomime, (4) improvisation, (5) play selection, (6) vocal interpretation, and (7) acting and technical production. Each unit presented contains an overview, performance objectives, suggested activities and procedures, and suggested evaluation techniques. (FL)

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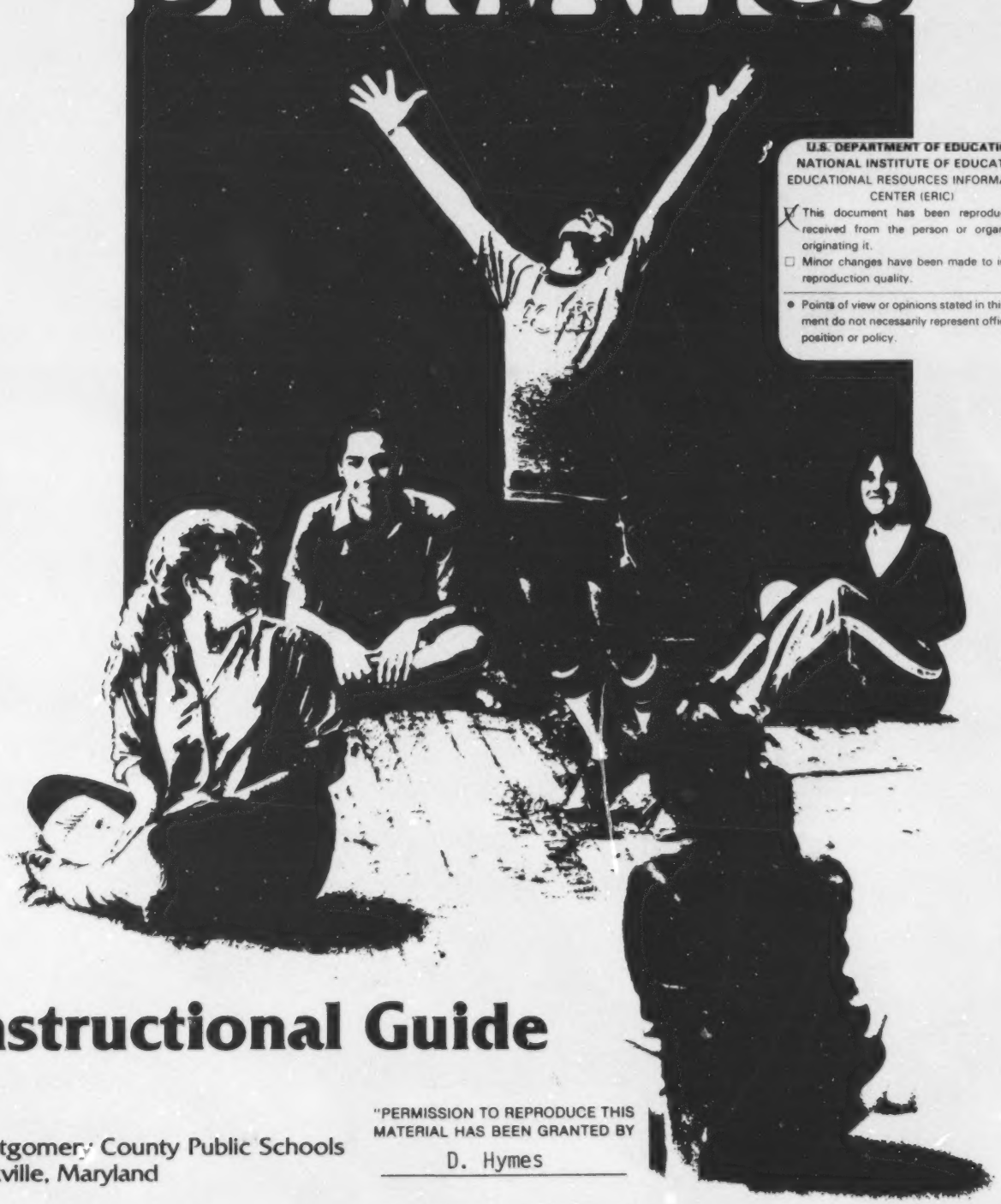
INTRODUCTORY DRAMATICS



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Instructional Guide

Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland

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Introductory Dramatics Guide for Grade 9 (Revised)

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Rockville, Maryland

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Phyllis Vestal, Pyle Junior High

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Preface

This curriculum guide is a distillation of the classroom experience of several Montgomery County teachers of theatre. It is hoped that you will accept the notions and ideas expressed here as the *suggestions* they are, rather than as the prescriptive lesson plans they were never meant to be. The writers wish to stress that the personality of any theatre course necessarily bears the imprint of the teacher, who sets performance standards, establishes priority of content, determines the quality of text materials, selects appropriate activities, and establishes the necessary rapport between himself/herself and the students which makes learning possible and effective. This guide, at best, can offer some statements of objectives and a selection of activities for achieving them.

Course Description and Overview

Introductory Dramatics, an eighteen-week elective course for ninth grade, is designed as an exploratory course in dramatics which will enhance students' aesthetic awareness, social development, intellectual growth, and technical knowledge. Further, this course will provide a base upon which students may decide whether they wish to elect more intensive theatre experiences in senior high school.

The course includes games, pantomime, improvisation, vocal interpretation, and play production. Through participation, students will have opportunities to increase their abilities to observe, to imagine, to respond, and to develop both body and vocal expression. The aim of this course is not to train students to become actors or directors but rather to increase their awareness of their own creativity and of the intellectual and aesthetic elements of theatre.

Introductory Dramatics is activity-oriented, and students electing this course will be required to participate actively. The final assessment in each unit will be based on this active participation and the demonstrated acquisition of skills.

The instructional objectives for the course are to:

- demonstrate skills in effective concentration, observation, and listening
- demonstrate an understanding of the aesthetic components of theatre as they develop from a literary form to a theatrical production
- develop aesthetic criteria for judging the merits of a performance based on identified aesthetic components
- use theatre vocabulary correctly
- identify and understand the variety of elements and skills necessary to produce a play
- develop basic theatre skills for the clear communication of ideas and emotions, both verbally and nonverbally
- assume the responsibility of a group member in each class activity
- demonstrate greater poise and self-confidence
- document the variety of career opportunities in the theatre arts

By the end of the semester course, the student should be able to:

- participate actively in all activities
- interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- demonstrate a willingness to perform
- focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant
- understand how the *play* differs from other literary forms
- recognize and utilize dramatic structure within a performance
- recognize the technical aspects of production included in the play script
- develop criteria for judging the merits of a play
- be familiar with source material for published plays
- be acquainted with a variety of plays
- select several plays for possible production
- demonstrate effective technical skills of pantomime

- demonstrate effective technical skills of improvisation
- demonstrate effective techniques of vocalization
- present a prepared oral presentation
- demonstrate a knowledge of the concepts of story theatre, readers' theatre, or radio drama
- demonstrate a knowledge of the technical vocabulary of theatre
- identify the use and effects of contributory elements in a production
- identify the roles of theatre personnel
- present an aesthetically pleasing performance
- evaluate the presentations of other students
- document the development of his/her own progress throughout the course

Notes to the Teacher

The graphic representation shown below illustrates the organizational framework supporting the Introductory Dramatics course. The teacher will note that an attempt has been made to integrate production and nonproduction activities.

Units II, V, and VII constitute the three units of a play production sequence. The sequence is divided to allow time for the ordering, reading, and studying of plays. The division also provides a unifying thread which will motivate students. The teacher should study these three units carefully before beginning the course, in order to make appropriate choices for the final project.

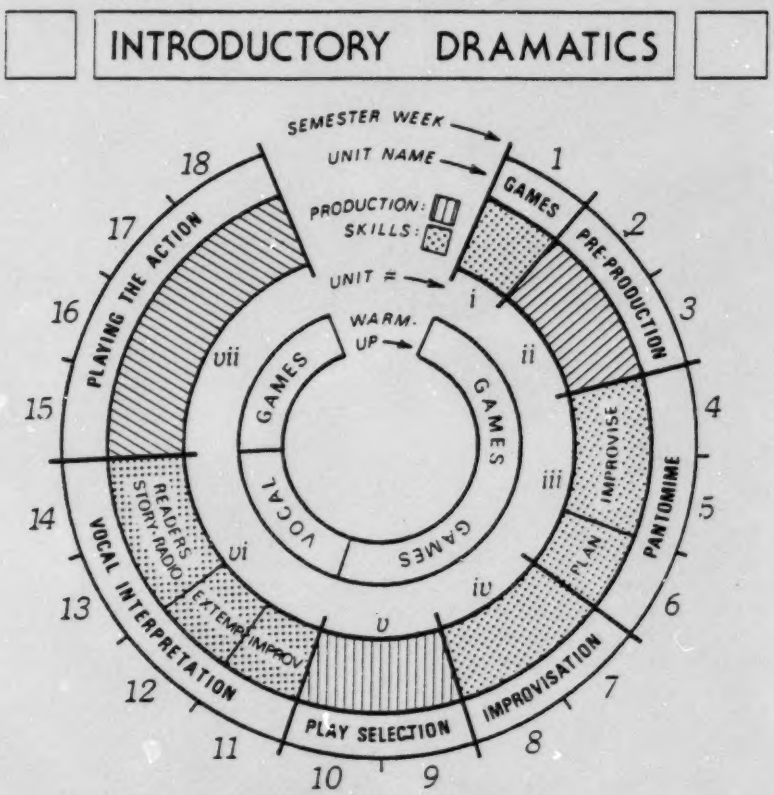
The theatre skills units I, III, IV, and VI are all related through techniques of theatre games and improvisation. The activities progress from short, simple exercises to activities that incorporate both verbal and nonverbal skills and dramatic structure.

When beginning a new unit, the teacher may wish to start with warmup activities. The use of games and/or vocal exercises preceding other activities will continually reinforce basic theatre skills of effective concentration, observation, and listening.

As the teacher reads through this guide, he/she will notice that each unit includes an overview, performance objectives, suggested activities/ procedures, and suggested assessment techniques. The teacher should not feel compelled to complete all the included activities. The sizes of classes and the enthusiasm and abilities of students must be considered. The individual needs of a given class should dictate the time spent on each unit and, possibly, even the exclusion of some units.

Similarly, teachers should carefully select assessment methods or techniques which measure what has been taught.

Although the assessment of any aesthetic learning will be in part subjective, the teacher should establish clearly defined and objective criteria for assessments, which should be given to students in advance.



Unit I. Introduction to Theatre Games

(One Week)

Unit Overview

The first experience the students should have in this course is involvement in a variety of games. These games should establish a relaxed atmosphere, enabling students to overcome inhibitions about performing alone or in a group situation. The games will also help students understand that everyone *can* and does act.

Playing a game is an experience that is different in degree but not in type from acting. Most games have social interaction and include a problem which must be solved. In order to reach the objectives, there must be a group agreement on the rules and group cooperation. Theatre is an extension of this group cooperation in an artistic framework.

As students become more involved with these games, they will soon realize that not only are they experiencing much individual freedom; they are also assuming responsibility to the group. They should develop self-discipline rather than merely responding to discipline imposed from outside.

Each of the following groups of exercises has a different focus. The suggested order of the games is intended to provide a progression of activities which help students first to relax, to interact, and to concentrate and then to communicate ideas and respond to sensory stimuli. The teacher will conclude each exercise when he/she feels the objectives of the game have been attained. The theatre games included in this introductory unit fall into the following categories:

A. Focus, Concentration, and Interaction Games
B. Icebreaker Games (Socialization, Communication, and Vocalization)
C. Trust and Sensory Awareness Games
D. Communication Skills Games
E. Observation Games

The teacher may wish to present the games in the order in which they appear or to change the order according to personal preference. The teacher may also wish to substitute other games with which he/she feels more comfortable. But within this introductory unit, the teacher should include games that focus upon the five skill categories identified.

Because theatre games stimulate imagination and creative process, additional games stressing other acting skills will be suggested throughout this guide.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- Interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- Demonstrate a willingness to perform
- Focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant

Suggested Activities and Procedures

A. Focus, Concentration, Interaction Games

Elephants, Giraffes, and 1776

Ask the group to form a large circle with one member in the center. Explain that the player in the center will point to another member of the group and will say "elephant," "giraffe," or "1776." The player indicated becomes the middle of a three-person form. If "elephant" is called, the middle person must put hands on nose, becoming the elephant's head, and the players on either side must place their hands near the player's ears, becoming elephant's ears. If "giraffe" is called, the player indicated (the middle person) must raise hands overhead, and the players on either side must put their hands on their hips and bend towards the middle person and touch, hip to hip. If "1776" is called, the middle player becomes the flag bearer, the person on the left becomes the drummer, and the person on the right becomes the fife player. If any one of the three does not execute the correct movement during a fast count to ten by the central player, that person becomes "it" and moves to the center of the group, and the person who was "it" rejoins the circle. The person in the center must point and count as quickly as possible for the game to be successful.

Focus

Divide the group in half, one group sitting (as an audience) and one group standing in front of the audience. Ask each group to observe the other. Those standing will soon become uncomfortable. Continue to tell the groups to look at each other. When the group standing shows great discomfort, give them a task to perform as they stand. Tell them to count chairs, blocks in the walls, or trees outside the window. Have them continue this until told to

stop. Next, reverse the groups. Have the second group follow similar procedures. Finally, ask all to sit and evalute the experience. Ask them to explain how they felt as the standing group. Then ask how they felt when a task was added. Point out that when they had to focus on a task, they became less aware of their physical situation. Explain that in each theatre game, they will be given a problem on which to focus.

Pass the Object (Wonder Ball)

Students sit in a circle and pass an object around the circle. The teacher sits with eyes closed and says, "Stop." The person caught holding the object is given a letter of the alphabet by the person to his/her left. She/he must then name six common nouns that begin with that letter, before the object is passed one full rotation. Variations: The size of the group should determine the number of common nouns stipulated. A more difficult form of this game requires the person to name either activities or occupations beginning with a specific letter.

B. Icebreaker Games

Personally Yours

This activity must be introduced the day before it will be used. Teacher introduces himself/herself by telling about his/her full name, e.g., the meaning of the names, origins, heritage, significance, feelings towards the name. Students are then asked to prepare similar presentations for the next class. They may wish to ask parents for background information.

In explaining what the name means to him/her, the student will reveal something about himself/herself; however, the focus of the activity should be on the name itself.

Name Game

Seated in a circle with eight to ten other students, each student chooses a color (variations: animal, descriptive words) and introduces himself/herself by first name and his/her (color) tag. Then, going around the circle, each student in turn repeats the names of everyone who has gone before and ends with his/her own name and tag. (e.g., "Barbara Yellow, Phyllis Peach, Dick Blue, etc.")

People's Choice

Teacher arbitrarily divides the class into two groups and sends each group to a different side of the room. The teacher then asks students to choose between two alternatives, sending those students who prefer one choice to one side of the room, and those who prefer the other alternative to the other side. Students switch sides according to their personal preferences. Questions may center on simple preferences or value-related issues. A list of approximately 20 questions should be prepared in advance. (Examples: Which do you prefer, Cadillacs or Volkswagens? Eating lunch at MacDonald's or Sans Souci? Mountain climbing or jogging? Reading a book or seeing a movie? Brown or green? Math or English? Coke or 7-Up? Sleeping late and going to bed late or getting up early and going to bed early? Making a lot of money or having a lot of free time? Defending the criminal or prosecuting one? Being a student or being a teacher? Going to a dance or having a few friends over for a party? Talking to Ralph Nader or to Robert Redford? Going to the beach or going skiing?) In this game, students must make quick decisions and will also learn something about his/her peers and himself/herself.

C. Trust and Sensory Awareness Games

Blind Walk

Ask the players to form pairs. It is suggested that a random method of pairing be used.* One of each pair will be the leader; the other, the follower. The person led will be blindfolded. After ten minutes, reverse roles. The object is to develop trust. The leader must be careful not to let the person led fall or bump into things. Students may decide for themselves how the leading is to be done (by voice, hand, or arm). The larger the area used, the more opportunities for activities; e.g., climbing stairs, drinking from a water fountain, etc. This activity can also be used to stimulate sensory awareness. Students can bring in objects with smells (perfume, alcohol, fruit, soap, spices), tastes (salt, sugar, potato chips, raisins, etc.), sounds (radio, bell, crumpled paper, clock, woodblock), touch (wool scarf, grapes, cotton balls, nuts, feather, powder, rice) and experience these objects without the sense of sight.

Blind Fall

Eight to ten students form a circle. One student is blindfolded and stands in the middle. When the student is ready, he/she relaxes and falls into the arms of the group members. The group then lifts and passes the student's relaxed body around or across the circle. Each student should have an opportunity to go into the center of the group.

Human Maze

Two students leave the room. One is blindfolded. The other students use their bodies to form a

*One way to pair students randomly is to have them form a line according to specific directions, e.g., low to high street address numbers, early to late birthdays. A student is then paired with the person next to him/her.

maze-like path through the room, creating obstacles through and around which the blindfolded person will be led, depending only upon his/her partner's voice.

D. Communication Skills Games

Echo Game

Divide the group into players and observers. Then start a discussion on a subject of special interest to the player group. When the discussion is well under way, stop the group and tell them that from that point on, before anyone else may speak, he or she must repeat what the last speaker has just said, to the previous speaker's satisfaction. Tell the observers to count the number of participants who give accurate accounts of what the previous speakers said. Change each group after a few minutes. Examples of discussion topics that might be used include: What's wrong with (*name of junior high school*)? Is education worth the bother? Have you been brought up with sexist double standards?

What's My Line? (to help students focus on word choice)

Prepare the following activity: Materials — Name tags for each person with the name of some famous person, real or imaginary. As each person enters the room or after each student is seated, pin the name of a famous person on the student's back without revealing the name on the card. Do this to each student. Students are not to tell each other the names on the name tags. Tell the group: "A label bearing the name of a person, living or dead, real or fictional, has been placed on your back. You may ask as many question as you wish of anyone in the group. However, you are allowed to ask only questions which may be answered by *yes, no, maybe, sometimes,* or *never.* You are not allowed to ask any other questions." If necessary, remind students that the questions should be directed towards narrowing the range of possible identities; e.g., sex, age, profession, etc. When a player guesses his/her identity or "gives up" after a reasonable time, another student begins. After students clearly understand the nature of the questioning, all students may circulate through the room at the same time, asking anyone questions until each student has learned the identity of his/her personality. Sample ideas: Mao Tse Tung, Indira Gandhi, Robin Hood, Hank Aaron, Farrah Fawcett, Richard Nixon, O.J. Simpson, Gabriel Kaplan, Archie Bunker, name of vice-principal, name of teacher, Billy Kilmer, Robert Redford, Frankenstein, Spiderman, Chris Evert Lloyd, Amy Carter, the Fonz, Marvin Mandel, James Bond, Rin-Tin-Tin, Robert Blake (Baretta), Mark Twain, Charles Dickens, Queen Elizabeth, Elizabeth Taylor, Abraham Lincoln, John-Boy Walton, Hercules, Linda Ronstadt, Cleopatra, Jesse James, Paul Lynde, Cookie Monster, Bionic Man, Tinkerbell, Peter Pan, Captain Hook, Winnie the Pooh, Nancy Reagan.

Accident Report

Prepare the following exercise: Six volunteers are selected to play the part of the report chain. They are given numbers, one through six, and sent out of the room. The teacher distributes the Accident Report Worksheet to the rest of the class. (Suggested Accident Report Worksheet follows Report No. a). The teacher reads the accident report with the class and explains that he/she will call in the first member of the report chain and read him the accident report. The first member of the report chain will call in the second member and retell the report to the best of his/her ability, and then the second member will call in the third, and so on, until all have been called in and heard the report from the person just ahead on the report chain.

As each member reports to the next on the chain, the rest of the class is to note on the Accident Report Work Sheet any changes in the new version from the previous report. As soon as the sixth member of the report chain repeats the accident report (to the teacher and class), the teacher reads the initial report once more.

This activity is followed by a large group discussion of the exercise. Focus for the discussion should be on the difficulty of transferring information accurately and on ways to improve one's ability to transfer information. The initial focus should be on the reactions of the six members of the reporting chain and on their feelings as they tried to concentrate on the message. It is important that the members not be subjected to blame or ridicule for faulty transmission of information. As a skill-building exercise, the class might repeat the activity with a new set of volunteers and a new accident report.

Report a) "Please listen carefully, as I must leave immediately to get to the hospital. I have just called the police from the gas station on the corner. Wait here and report the accident to them. As I was crossing the intersection, I saw the milk truck, which was heading west, start to make a right hand turn when the station wagon, heading east, started to turn left. They both must have put on the brakes at the same instant, because both brake lights flashed on at the same time. The wagon's wheels must have locked, because it went straight ahead into the side of the truck."

Suggested Accident Report Worksheet

Directions: For each repetition of the report, note

any additions, subtractions, and/or distortion from the previous report.

First repetition:
Second repetition:
Third repetition:
Fourth repetition:
Fifth repetition:
Sixth repetition:

You may want to do only four repetitions if time is short.

Report b) "Please call my boss and tell him I have had to change my plans. I hailed a taxi on Connecticut Avenue to take me to National Airport. When we were on the George Washington Parkway going south, the driver steered left to avoid a pothole. As he did so, I saw that a blue Volkswagen was in his blind spot. The driver was forced to brake. But, as he did, a yellow Toyota that had been following too closely went into the back of the car. I had the taxi driver pull over since I saw the whole thing, and I'm now waiting for the police."

Report c) "As soon as I walked in the door, I smelled the smoke. Mrs. Kramer from Apartment 1B was busy knocking on the Winstons' door, trying to get in. The new tenant in 3C, awakened by the banging, was ready to complain, but then she realized what the racket was about. So she ran up to the fifth floor and began banging on every door while I went to the corner firebox. In the meantime, Mrs. Kramer phoned the police."

Experiment in Communication

Explain to the group that there are differences between one-way and two-way communication. (In one-way communication, the sender tells the receiver something; and this telling ends the communication. In two-way communication, the receiver of the message can ask for clarification; and both sender and receiver can benefit from the increased understanding which results.)

Ask the group to choose a member who is capable of giving clear directions. That person will be the sender. The other members of the group are receivers and will be prepared, with paper and pencil, to follow the sender's directions.

Ask the sender to leave the room. Give him/her a diagram of contiguous figures, first to examine and then to explain to the class so that they will be able to draw exact duplicates. (Suggested diagrams on following pages).

The sender must stand so that he/she does not face the receivers. The receivers must follow the sender's directions without communicating with the sender or with each other. Place a time limit of five minutes on this experiment.

Compare the results and discuss reactions. Give the sender a second diagram; now have him/her face the audience and describe the diagram. This time, the receivers may ask questions; and the sender may reply in words but not in demonstrative gestures. Compare the results and discuss the group's reactions. This game relates to theatrical experiences in that the playwright and/or actor must rely primarily, and sometimes *only*, upon one-way communication.

E. Observation Games

Mirror Game

Pair the students. A faces B. A is the mirror and B initiates all movement. A reflects all B's activities and facial expressions. While looking into the mirror, B engages in a simple activity such as hand or face washing. After a time, A and B change roles.

Change the Picture (to build observation skills)

Pair members of the group. Have the two players face each other. Tell them to observe each other carefully. Then have players turn their backs on each other and make three changes in their appearance — such as altering hair styles, removing or adding jewelry, or rearranging clothing. Then have players face each other again and identify the changes made. Change partners and continue. Students should change different things, or the teacher may instruct them to make more changes with each new partner.

Who Started the Motion?

One student leaves the room while the other students sit in a circle and choose a leader. The leader begins a motion which the others follow (example: hand clapping). The student who left the room is called back into the center of the circle. Periodically, the leader changes the group's motions while the student in the center tries to determine who the leader is.

Suggested Assessment

The teacher might keep a chart to record daily participation of each student, noting the following:

- showing willingness to participate
- seeking opportunities to participate
- assuming responsibilities as a member of the group
- reducing distracting behaviors and showing less evidence of self-consciousness

Unit II. Pre-production

(Two Weeks)

Unit Overview

The goal of this unit is to involve the students as active and creative participants in the literary and theatrical experiences of drama. Within this unit, students will read and study a play and select plays for the course's culminating activity. This should motivate students by giving direction to the individual units, beyond their immediate objectives, toward an encompassing final project.

This unit is divided into two parts:

A. Understanding Plays

B. Choosing a Play for Production

In teaching the first part of this unit, the teacher selects a play to be read by the entire class. An appropriate selection is determined by:

- available scripts
- available time (For this reason a one-act may be preferable to a full-length play.)
- a dramatic structure that can be easily identified
- an involving situation and interesting characters
- a significant theme
- a pervasive mood

The second part of this unit is the selection of a play for a culminating final project. Before beginning the unit, the teacher should decide upon the type of activity he/she wishes to use. The following are alternatives for the teacher to consider:

Production of a one-act play by the entire class

It is possible to double cast, that is, to choose two students for each role, and involve the entire class in one play. The teacher, a student, or both could direct the play; and each cast would present the play to outside audiences.

Production of several one-act plays by small groups

Each group would have a different student director who would be assisted by the teacher. Students could present these plays to an outside audience or to the class.

Production of scenes

After each choosing a character, students in groups of two to four would rehearse and prepare scenes. There would be a minimum of teacher direction. Students could present these scenes within the class and also to an outside audience.

It is suggested that the teacher refer to Unit VII, PLAYING THE ACTION, for an understanding of how this unit relates to the culminating activity.

Throughout this unit, the continuation of theatre games for part of each class period is advisable due to the inactive nature of the unit.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- participate actively in all activities
- interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- understand how the play form differs from other literary forms
- recognize dramatic structure
- recognize the technical aspects of the production included in the play script
- develop criteria for judging the merits of a play
- become familiar with source material for published plays
- become acquainted with a variety of plays
- select several plays for possible production

Suggested Activities and Procedures

A. Understanding Plays

The purpose of this play reading activity is to create an awareness of the characteristics of a play, as written and as performed. First, the teacher should review literary elements: mood, theme, characterization, setting, and dramatic structure (plot development of conflict — introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution). These elements may also be discussed during and after the play reading activity.

Second, the teacher should explain different stage positions and the terms which identify them (upstage, downstage, etc.) to help students visualize the action of the play as they read. The following exercise may be used to familiarize the students with the different stage positions:

- Orient the students by having them imagine themselves at the center of the stage, facing the audience. Explain that "stage right" and "stage left" refer to the actor's right and left.
- Using a diagram of a stage drawn on the

chalkboard or on an overhead projector, illustrate various stage positions such as "up left center" (ULC), "down right" (DR), "down right center" (DRC), etc.

- Using a similar diagram on which symbols have been drawn to represent furniture, doors, and windows, ask individual students to identify stage positions relative to the furniture on the stage. For example, students could be asked to identify such positions as "up of the table," "right of the stage left window," "down of the sofa," "down left of the chair."
- Have two or three students stand in front of the class, simulating stage center. Call out different stage positions and have the students move to positions. Different groups of students may repeat this exercise until the teacher is satisfied that they are moving confidently to the different positions.
- As an additional exercise, have a student take a stage center position. Ask him/her to make a series of crosses to positions which students in the class must identify.

Finally, the teacher should discuss conditions which are unique to plays. These are important in both reading and seeing plays, and include the following:

- **Lack of narrative voice** — Although there are exceptions, plays are generally written without a narrative voice. This characteristic has important implications for the genre. It means that an author's attitudes and point of view are conveyed only within the characters' thoughts, words, and actions. When a play is produced, the author's words are supplemented by the interpretations of the director, the performers, and the production crew members.
- **Distance** — It is important that the reader/observer of plays maintain a certain objective "distance" in his/her initial reactions to characters. Premature conclusions about a character's personality and/or motives is apt to type the character and blinds the observer to a fuller, more complete understanding of the character, what he symbolizes, how he furthers the action, and what part he plays in conveying the theme. The concept of distance in judging characters is particularly important to plays in which the influence of a narrative voice is not used.
- **Condensation of time** — During an average two-hour production, days, months, or years may pass. The action of life is accelerated. Monumental decisions are struggled over, and ordinary everyday decisions are played down. Life is one major crisis after another, one important speech after another, one important argument after another. Conflicts are sharply drawn and quickly developed, with few *un*important events occurring.
- **Contributory effects of all theatrical elements** — The author's words are not all that is required for a play production. Designs, colors, and sounds will be used to enhance the meaning and effectiveness of the author's creativity. It is here that the creative efforts of other individuals are added to those of the author, and it is through this pooling of resources that the creative process is completed. In the script, contributory elements are not usually extensively described. Students should realize that "lights up" doesn't explain the colors or intensity of the lights; "a staircase at left" doesn't describe the stairs. Words become a concept reference; the production staff will take the words and relate broader concepts to them to give them meaning and to enhance the production.
- **Willingness to suspend disbelief** — In watching a play, the observer is asked to accept as reality what he/she is viewing. A soliloquy is a good example of this, since it is something unnatural — unnatural in the sense that in real life, people do not speak aloud, revealing their inner thoughts, and then step back into situations. Another example is the belief that an environment continues beyond what is seen on stage; e.g., that there is another room down the hall. The idea of looking "in" on life, that a fourth-wall has been removed from the stage and that the audience is watching without the performers' knowledge, is another dramatic convention that the observer accepts.
- **Immediacy** — Plays are in the "present tense." They create a feeling that the situation is happening now.
- **Necessity for audience** — More than any other, this characteristic truly distinguishes the play from any other genre. Plays are meant to be seen. When reading a play, students must visualize the action as it might appear on stage, not just read the words. The more complete the pictures imagined, the more complete the experience.

In addition, students should realize that there is a quality of sharing the experience in audience behavior. A phenomenon of group dynamics, behavioral contagion, occurs when the mood on stage permeates the audience. As a result, the total interaction is greater than the sum of its parts.

B. Choosing a Play for Production

Selection of One-Act Plays

After the teacher has decided which activity to undertake, students become actively involved in the play selection process. They become, in effect, producers. Students must recognize the need for serious decision-making, since their choice will have a practical application within this course.

If the class is going to present one or more one-act plays, students may begin by using the catalogues of

play publishers to read brief descriptions of available plays. It is suggested that they work in small groups of five or six, read the play descriptions aloud, and write down the names of those plays that might make good productions. Because the number of selections available can be overwhelming, the teacher may wish to compile an abbreviated catalogue for students to consider. When each group has narrowed its choices to five, the class as a whole discusses the descriptions and again narrows the choices to between 8-12 plays. These plays are then ordered. If adequate money is available, ordering two copies of each script is helpful. The play selection process will be completed after the scripts have been delivered. (See Unit V).

Production of Scenes

If scenes are going to be presented, students should begin by listing the titles of plays that are available to them through the library, literature books, or other sources. The goal of this procedure is for each student to compile a list of four or five plays to be read over the next five weeks. It then becomes the responsibility of the teacher to evaluate the appropriateness of the choices. If a play is unfamiliar to the teacher, reading a catalogue description may prove helpful. If necessary, additions and deletions to the student's list should be made and discussed. The student's responsibility is to read the plays over the next few weeks.

In choosing either a play or scenes, students should consider the following questions:

- Is the play's description interesting? Do the plot and mood sound stimulating? Would the characters be enjoyable to create?
- Are there enough good-sized roles for the class? (An assumption about this can be made by counting the number of characters' names given in the description.)
- Is there a proper balance of male/female roles? Can the play be doublecast or can double roles be used? Could certain roles be played by either males or females?
- What talent is available in the class? Do the roles sound challenging and suitable to the abilities of the class?
- Who will be the audience? Is the play suitable for this audience? Can it be entertaining for this audience? Does it seem to have a worthwhile message or theme?
- What is the reason for the performance; i.e., is the play for a particular occasion? Is the play well-suited to this occasion?
- Where will the play be produced? What are the limitations of this area? How will the limitations of the area affect the production?
- Ideally, what sets are needed? Costumes? Properties? Special effects? Special make-up requirements?
- How much money can be spent on production?
- What will be our approximate expenses? Royalties? Playbooks? Sets? Costumes? Properties? Special effects? Make-up?
- Can elaborate sets, costumes, properties, and special effects be sacrificed without diminishing the joy of production? In other words, how much of the interest to produce this play stems from the literature and how much from the creative possibilities for production?

Suggested Assessment

In addition to recording daily participation grades, a teacher might wish to use a test; an outside reading and report; or a field trip to a play production, followed by an analysis of the play based on content presented in the unit.

The objectives for Part B will be met when a list of possible plays for production has been compiled.

Unit III. Pantomime

(Three Weeks)

Unit Overview

Pantomime, the non-verbal communication of a feeling, a mood, or an idea, affords the student an opportunity for self-expression through the use of symbols and gestures. An important step in creating believable stage action, pantomime helps the student to understand the three essential elements of performance: situation, character, and mood. This unit in pantomime also emphasizes other important performance skills: stage presence, aesthetic use of the playing area (staging), and effective pantomime techniques. These elements are defined as follows:

A. **Situation** is the imagined problem or obstacle to which the student responds. The pantomimed situation should have:

- A beginning that clearly establishes the problems or obstacles and the setting for the action
- A middle that develops the action
- An end that completes the action

B. **Character** is the outward expression of inner personality through physical appearance and movement. There are many factors involved in characterization, and the student should not be expected to utilize all of them. The student should, however, be encouraged to experiment with a variety of factors, used individually or in combination. Some of the factors that might be considered in the creation of a character are:

- The character's background, age, sex, occupation, social status
- The character's mental characteristics
- The character's spiritual beliefs
- The character's emotional characteristics

These factors can be expressed through posture, movement, mannerisms, gestures, and facial expressions. Here again, the student should be encouraged to experiment.

C. **Mood** is the pervasive emotional quality communicated through the action. The student determines the mood when he/she decides *how* the action is to be performed. For example, if the action is making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, *how* the sandwich is made (at what tempo? with what intensity? with what interest? etc.) expresses a mood. (Is the sandwich maker angry? hungry? lonely? tired?) Before performing, the student should decide how the character feels about what he/she is doing, and the communication of this feeling creates the mood.

D. **Stage Presence** is the self-discipline necessary for an effective performance. In developing stage presence, students learn to minimize self-conscious behavior that distracts from the activity. For the purposes of this unit, stage presence includes behavior before, during, and after the activity. The teacher should stress the importance of stage presence and may wish to distribute copies of the following guidelines:

- When it is your turn to perform, quickly and quietly set up the playing area.
- Take a moment to focus on what you are about to do so as to avoid false starts.
- Introduce your pantomime with a title.
- Remember that the basis of pantomime is believability.
- Concentrate on your activity, ignoring any distractions. Focus your full attention on what you are doing.
- Do not detract from your performance by giggling or commenting on your actions.
- When working with others, share the scene. Respond to actions of others. Do not monopolize the scene. Do not upstage your fellow actors or try to "steal the scene." Stay "in character." When you are on stage, you are performing even when you are not the center of attention.
- Maintain interest and be enthusiastic.
- To end the performance, pause briefly and leave the stage in a controlled manner.

E. **Use of the Playing Area** refers to staging the action so that every member of the audience can see with a clear and aesthetically pleasing perspective.

The teacher should instruct the student in the following:

- **Body positioning.** The strongest position for a performer is the full-front position. The performer's position generally weakens when he/she turns away from the audience. Profiled positions can also be strong but may cut off the audience's view. A performer should turn his/her back to the audience only when there is a reason for doing so.
- **Area.** The goal of the student is to use areas of the playing space which provide *appropriate* visibili-

ty of the action. For this reason, the downstage-center part of the playing area will usually be most effective. There will, however, be reasons for using other areas; but students should be cautioned against hiding the action from the audience by playing too deeply or to the extreme edges of an area.

- **Surroundings.** To create a believable environment, the student must establish his/her surroundings concretely and maintain these surroundings consistently throughout the action. Students must know the imaginary location of the area and properties within the area before the audience can sense the environment. To do this, the student should consider using vertical level changes (e.g., standing on a real chair to reach an imaginary high shelf in a closet; lying under a real table for an imaginary lower bunk bed) as well as dividing the horizontal area to indicate both the inside and outside of a house or the interior of a car.
- **Aesthetics.** The student should consider how the pantomime looks to the audience. The greater the variety of body positioning, movement, and use of the horizontal and vertical areas, the more interesting and aesthetically pleasing the action will be for the audience.

F. **Techniques** are the creative and imaginative methods used to establish most effectively the situation, mood, and character.

The techniques that the student should use in a pantomime performance are:

- Concentration
- Selection of appropriate and meaningful action
- Accurate sensory and emotional recall
- Timing (pace and rhythm of performance)
- Exaggeration
- Integration of expressive body and facial responses

The unit begins with theatre games that deal with basic sensory recall and then proceeds through activities which introduce the elements of pantomime in a progressive and cumulative order. The later activities reinforce all of the skills taught earlier and culminate in a structured pantomime presentation.

The list below outlines the order of the activities and describes the specific purposes of the suggested activities. Each group of activities incorporates all of the purposes of the preceding group(s) and adds a new emphasis.

G. **Sensory Recall** — concentration, observation

H. **Creating Believable Objects** — spontaneity, group interaction, pantomime techniques

I. **Creating Believable Activities** — stage presence; situation with beginning, middle, and ending

J. **Creating an Environment** — use of playing area

K. **Creating a Character** — prepared integration of all elements

There are numerous pantomime activities that can be used to achieve this unit's objectives. Time is a limitation that must be considered in deciding how many activities can be used.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- participate actively in each activity either as performer or as a member of the audience
- interact constructively with other students toward a common goal
- convey the presence of simple imagined objects with clarity
- perform believable pantomimed activities
- present a situation in pantomime utilizing a defined beginning, middle, and ending
- externalize and communicate a sense of character through the use of body movement and facial expression
- communicate a mood through action
- focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant
- make action visible to the audience through effective body positioning
- make action visible to the audience through effective use of the playing area
- arrange imaginary physical items to create a clear environment
- present an aesthetically pleasing performance
- utilize pantomime techniques in a planned presentation
- evaluate the presentations of other students

Suggested Activities and Procedures

G. Sensory Recall

In these exercises, the student remembers a past experience and communicates the remembered image. In developing this skill, the student becomes aware of his own storehouse of sensory experiences. On stage, the performer incorporates sensory recall and makes the performance more believable.

Listening Experience

Have the students close their eyes and listen to the sounds of their environment. Ask them to concentrate on hearing as many different sounds as possible. After a minute or two, ask the class to open their eyes and compile a list on the blackboard of all the sounds heard. Then ask how this exercise might be incorporated within a pantomimed activity.

What Am I Hearing?

Give a student or a group of students an imaginary sound to which to listen. The student(s) must

communicate this sound to the audience by physically responding to the sound. The more concrete the image is for the performer, the better the identification will be for the audience. Note: Students will often recall something, and the audience will think it is something else. There's nothing "wrong" with this; it could just mean that the two images are similar, but it could also mean that not enough details were given.

A good follow-up is not only to have the class tell what the person heard but to explain why they reached their conclusions. If the class was wrong, have the person replay the action. This technique can be used throughout this unit and should yield improved performances.

Variations: Both these exercises should be repeated to use the other senses -- sight, taste, smell, and touch.

Examples to use for sensory experience:

Sound: a clock ticking, a marching band, baby crying, whispered conversation, a loud crash

Sight: ants on the sidewalk, a bus coming down the street from a distance, your reflection in a piece of glass, a pattern in the clouds, the entrails of a frog

Taste: pizza, slice of lemon, salted peanuts, watermelon, vinegar

Smell: bacon being fried, smoke, alcohol, sardines, perfume

Touch: cotton ball, sandpaper, snowball, turtle, hot sand (to walk on), a needle, fur

H. Creating Believable Objects

Toss the Ball

Ask the players to form a circle. The teacher tosses one member an imaginary ball, stating its size and weight. The player is instructed to toss the ball to another group member and, in turn, to another, keeping the ball in motion. The teacher calls out changes in the ball's size and weight, and the players must react to these changes. This activity may be concluded with an imaginary game of dodge ball.

Machine

One student enters the playing area and begins a movement characteristic of a machine part. After observing the movement, a second student joins the first, using a complementary movement. Students continue to join, one at a time, until all students are participating. The teacher may then instruct the students to speed up the action, slow down the action, or add sounds.

Variations: It is possible to have students begin this game with both a movement and a sound characteristic of a machine.

Students as a class or in small groups build machines, real or imaginary, with a specific purpose (e.g., ice cream machine, war machine, time machine, sewing machine).

Create and Adapt

Students sit in a circle. The teacher begins the activity by forming an object out of an imaginary substance. Once the object is created and used, the object is passed to a student who re-forms the substance into another object. The game continues until all students have participated.

Variations: Send one student to the front of the class and have that student, in pantomime, invent a practical tool. When another student recognizes what the tool is, he/she enters the playing area, takes the tool from the first player (who returns to the audience), uses the tool as intended by the first player, and then changes it in some way so that it will perform a different task. The game continues until all possibilities are exhausted.

It is also possible to play this game by beginning in the same manner but having the student enter the playing area and change the action, "explaining the new action to the first student, who remains with him/her and also participates. Each student who enters the playing area remains in the playing area, participating in each new situation. Although the student who enters must explain the new action, he/she explains by *showing and doing*, rather than by directly stating the change. (e.g., A student enters a situation in which a rope is being used to tie a suitcase to the top of a car. The student should enter and say, in pantomime, "Do me a favor. Grab the line and walk around to the other side of the pool and hook it in," rather than, "I'm going to use the rope as a lane-divider in a swimming pool.")

Changes may be made by changing the nature of the situation (e.g., a suitcase that needs lashing is changed to a swimming pool that needs dividing), or by changing the "tool" invented (e.g., a kite string may become a rope, which may become a shoe lace, etc.).

What's in a Box?

Students are divided into small groups. Each group is told that there is a large imaginary box on an imaginary table in the middle of the group's circle. The box contains many items. Three-by-five cards, each having the name of one item which might be found in the box, are passed out to the players. One by one, each player must go to the box and take out the object the card calls for. He/she must handle the item, and the group tries to guess what the object is. Guessing should not begin until the student has completed the task.

Variations: To emphasize the importance of a detailed re-creation, the items in the box might all be closely related (e.g., Box #1 — a pen, a mechanical

pencil, a lead pencil, a Bic pen, a fat pen that can write four different colors, a crayon, a magic marker, a thin felt tip; Box #2 — juice glass, crystal stemware, milk glass, plastic 7-11 freebee, a coffee cup; Box #3 — shampoo bottle, milk bottle, gallon jug, coffee jar; Box #4 — chewing gum, M & Ms, raisins, Mounds, redhots, jawbreakers; Box #5 — ice cream, jello, pudding, fruit cup, soup, canteloupe, grapefruit; Box #6 — pocket watch, toy watch, compass, alarm clock, underwater watch, diamond watch, ring watch, sundial clock, stop watch.

This game can also be played with the class as one large group.

Tug of War

This activity may be begun by pairing off members of the class or by dividing the class into equal teams. Tell each pair or team that they are to play tug-of-war with an imaginary rope. Explain that they are to react with their entire bodies to the resulting tension.

Variations: To work on textural recall, vary the thickness and texture of the "rope," changing it into a chain, a nylon thread, a fine gold necklace that cannot be broken, a weakening laser beam, a banner, etc.

In the same manner, instead of having the students interact as themselves, give the teams roles, such as the Russian Navy vs. the U.S. Navy; the Alpha Z's vs. the Beta Omegas; Willowbrook Elementary School vs. Hillside; parents vs. teenagers; firefighters vs. police; Bethesda Senior Citizens Club vs. Chevy Chase Senior Citizens Club. Encourage the students to interact vocally and physically, yelling support for their teammates and condemning the other team as they struggle.

I. Creating Believable Activities

Each student should choose an individual pantomime to practice and perform for the class. Emphasis should be placed upon creating a believable action. The teacher may wish to have students play themselves, placing emphasis on only the activity. These activities should be planned and practiced, with attention given to developing an effective beginning, middle, and end of a situation.

Suggestions for activities:

- unwrapping birthday presents
- threading a needle
- juggling
- making a sandwich
- setting a table
- untying a knot in a shoe lace
- dressing for a specific occasion: tennis, swimming, formal party, etc.
- fixing a flat tire
- trying to get a hamster back into its cage
- taking notes in class
- sharpening a pencil
- putting on a tight bathing cap
- dissecting an animal in biology
- looking for something you've lost
- cleaning your glasses
- unscrewing a tight jar lid
- folding a sheet
- folding a map
- trying to cross a creek without getting wet
- eavesdropping on a conversation at the table next to you
- cooking on a barbeque
- eating spaghetti
- riding a skateboard
- breaking a window
- building a birdhouse
- playing tennis against a backboard
- duck hunting
- deer hunting
- putting up a tent
- driving a car
- backpacking
- trying on shoes
- playing basketball
- taking a shower or bath
- shoveling snow
- combing and setting your hair
- painting a picture
- playing in the leaves
- getting up in the morning
- stepping on the cat's tail
- brushing your teeth
- buying groceries
- washing your hair
- walking a dog
- roasting marshmallows
- cheerleading
- shooting an arrow
- playing golf
- putting on makeup
- making a bed
- cooking
- baking
- focusing a microscope
- climbing a tree
- weightlifting
- delivering newspapers
- climbing a ladder
- shuffling and dealing cards
- playing pinball
- playing a musical instrument

J. Creating a Believable Environment

Spectator Events

On slips of paper, write the names of events or activities involving an audience. Then have students, individually or in small groups, enter the playing area and sit or stand as if they were to be spectators. Performers should imagine the action and recall the spectator experience through facial and bodily responses. The student should place the imagined action in the area where the rest of the class is seated. This activity is especially useful to strengthen self-discipline and concentration skills.

Note: If this activity is played with small groups entering the playing area, the participants should be reminded that they are not concerned with interacting or playing off each other although some movements will be coordinated.

Suggested events:

- horse race
- basketball game at high school or at Capital Center
- hockey game
- baseball game at park or at Memorial Stadium
- opera
- war movie, romantic movie, western, etc.
- ballet performance
- trial
- rock concert
- National Symphony concert
- bull fight
- accident
- surgical operation
- construction at a building site
- circus
- demolition of skyscraper
- tour of museum
- tour of monument
- tour of production plant
- a hall fight
- fireworks
- fire
- belly dancer performing
- weightlifting
- waiting to jump rope
- watching window washer

Where Game

Give a homework assignment which will require each student to draw a floor plan of one room in a house or in any location with which he/she is familiar. All walls, furniture, windows, doors, etc. should be clearly labeled. Students should then study their drawings and practice creating the rooms nonverbally by walking through them, touching objects, and avoiding obstacles. In class, each student will create the environment he/she drew. Afterwards, the student's drawing should be passed around, and the students should discuss how successful the student was, suggesting what else might have been done to make the presentation more effective.

K. Creating a Character

Step into Character

As an introduction to this activity, have the entire class walk around the periphery of the room with their natural cadence and posture. Ask the students to concentrate on certain aspects as they walk as you call out directions, one at a time (e.g., How do your hands move? Does the weight fall evenly on the balls of your feet? How do your shoulders move? neck? head? etc.) After having them focus on each aspect of their natural walks, ask them to change one aspect and focus on how that change affects their walk. Then, while the students are walking, ask them to imagine the age, social position, or any distinctive characteristic of a person who might walk that way.

Ask students to imagine some activity such as greeting someone, window shopping, browsing in a store, walking through a cafeteria line, entering a meeting late; and have each student in turn enter the playing area to create a character by changing his/her natural posture and/or facial expression according to a specific quality of character: age, sex, personality, occupation, etc.

An extension of this activity would be to give the class an environment in which people interact and have the students walk through the area, playing the roles of characters they have created.

Suggested environments: family reunion, medical convention, fundraisers, birthday party, alumnae dinner

Feelings

Before class, prepare slips of paper with specific statements about a character's feelings. Students draw one statement each and must, in turn, walk through the playing area, expressing that emotion nonverbally.

Examples:

"I'd love to go somewhere with anyone."

"I'm so bored! I can't think of anything to do!"

"I really don't want to go there."

"I wonder what that person is doing?"

"I hope there's a way I can do this without being caught."

"Nobody likes me."

"I'm so ashamed."

"I'm on top of the world!"

"I can hardly wait! Santa's coming tonight!"

"I'll never finish — I have so much to do my head is spinning!"

"I have a headache that is so bad I can hardly see."

"I just can't figure out how to do this problem — I'm frustrated."

"I'm impatient and tired of waiting."

"I think somebody's following me."

"I'm so angry I could break down that wall!"

"I have the answer to life's problem."

"I really want to help that person."

"I'm good looking and well-dressed."

"I'm thinking; don't bother me."

"I feel sick."

"I'm in a hurry — I have something important to do."

"I can't bear to look at anyone. My grief is so great my heart will break."

"I'm somebody important."

"I'm so exhausted, I can hardly keep my eyes open."

Have the class guess after each student's performance what emotion was expressed. Ask students to be specific: What was it the performer did that conveyed that feeling? Face? Gestures? Body tension? If the class is not sure of what someone's performance was supposed to convey, it would be valuable to have the student repeat his/her performance, changing it to make the emotion clearer.

L. Culminating Pantomime

You Are What You Choose

At the beginning of class, each student draws three slips of paper, one from each of the three boxes: Activities (Situations); Occupations (Character); and Emotions (Mood). The choices are to be used in a pantomimed scene that has a beginning, middle, and end. Students are to be given classtime in which to prepare their presentations.

It might be helpful to give each student a list of questions to consider as they practice:

- How will the audience know what I am doing? What details must I include?
- How will I arrange the imaginary properties so that the audience will see the environment?
- How will I develop the aspect of character?
- How will my mood affect the way in which I develop the activity?
- Can I use different levels, areas, and body positions to create variety?

Variations:

Any number of enjoyable variations can be used to help students make choices, of activities, occupations, and emotions.

Students may also choose their own characters, situations, and moods for a final activity.

Note: This activity may also be used in the improvisation unit without giving students as much time to prepare.

See previous activities for suggested activities and moods. Occupations can be listed in the same manner.

Pantomime with Music

Preparation: The teacher plays a recording of instrumental music and asks students to close their eyes. As they listen, they are to visualize an activity that seems to be suggested by the quality of the music. When the music has ended, the students share their images. One of these images is chosen, and the students volunteer to improvise the activity, developing it according to changes of pace, rhythm, instrumentation, and other qualities of the music. Students participating should also add characterization to the activity.

This can be repeated several times with different music. It is often effective to keep the same activity and change the music to explore the variety of moods and characterizations suggested by the music.

Activity: Students are to select a piece of music and develop a pantomimed situation and characters that express the mood of the music. The pantomime should contain the six basic elements of pantomime. The students may work alone or in groups of two or three. The checklist in Exercise 1 may also be used for this activity.

Variation: Students may use a work of art or a photograph as a stimulus, beginning in the positions of characters in the work and continuing to develop the pantomime.

Suggested Assessment

Teachers may wish to continue evaluating students on a daily basis as in the theatre games unit, recording each student's participation and growth in self-confidence and self-discipline.

In addition, one of the culminating pantomime activities may be used as a final evaluation for assessing the student's attainment of the unit's objectives. A sample teacher evaluation sheet follows.

Because students will participate as audience members as well as performers, they may become more involved if they evaluate each other's presentations. A sample of a student evaluation form also follows. This form encourages the student to record his/her observations and not to "judge" the presentations. Following a presentation, audience members may discuss the performance by referring to their forms and giving specific examples. The teacher may collect the forms to assess the audience's involvement

or may use the students' oral evaluations as an assessment measure.

Another method of evaluating both the performer and the audience member is to have an audience member repeat the pantomime of the performer. The performer then sees how his/her performance looked to the audience, and the teacher sees how much the audience member observed.

Teacher Evaluation Sheet
Sample

		G	A	P
SITUATION	A clear situation is established in the beginning.			
	The situation has substance (shows development of action).			
	The situation has a clear ending.			
CHARACTER	A sense of character is achieved through movement.			
	A sense of character is achieved through facial expression.			
MOOD	Characterization establishes mood.			
	Appropriate music supports mood.			
	Timing of music and movement are integrated.			
STAGE PRESENCE	Student begins and ends properly.			
	Student shows concentration (is not distracted or distracting).			
	Student is responsive to other students' performances.			
USE OF AREA	Student creates a clear environment.			
	Areas used and body positioning facilitate visibility.			
	Student uses a variety of areas, levels, positions.			
TECHNIQUE	Actions are appropriate and accurate.			
	Actions are exaggerated.			
	Total			

Good	3	43-48	A
Average	2	38-42	B
Poor	1	33-37	C
		28-32	D

Student Evaluation Form
Sample

Performer's name _____
Your name _____
Character conveyed _____
Mood conveyed _____
Situation: Beginning ____ Middle ____ End ____

Actions:	**Yes**	**No**
Appropriate		
Accurate		
Exaggerated		
Believable		
Creative		
Detailed		
Slow		
Use of Stage Areas and Levels:		
Broad (uses entire stage)		
Limited (uses specific area)		
Divided (uses different areas to show different places)		
Uses areas with good visibility		
Uses levels with good visibility		
Uses one level		
many levels		
Uses positions with good visibility		
Balanced (uses different areas equally)		
Creates stage pictures		
symmetrical		
asymmetrical		

Comments:

Unit IV. Improvisation

(Two Weeks)

Unit Overview

Improvisation is the spontaneous reaction to a problem. A decision-making process, improvisation creates an awareness of the way in which people live and deal with change. By using imaginary sets of circumstances, the student uses improvisation to develop solutions to conflicts that are not predetermined by a fixed script.

This unit will build upon the skills taught during the Games and Pantomime units. The fundamentals of games are included in improvisation — concentration, cooperation, trust, and spontaneity. For that reason, the teacher may wish to repeat games from the first unit. In addition, variations of previously mentioned games and new ones are included at the beginning of the suggested activities to be used throughout this unit as warm-ups.

The definition of dramatic structure introduced within the Pantomime unit will be retained, but it will be expanded to include Conflict: Introduction to Setting and Character (beginning); Development of Conflict (middle); and Resolution of Conflict (ending). The skill of sensory recall will be reinforced. A significant difference between the two units is that in improvisation, planning is kept to an absolute minimum.

Because verbalization is desirable in many of the activities, extemporaneous speaking is a skill which will be introduced in this unit. Vocalization adds another dimension to characterization and story development as introduced in the pantomime unit.

The organization of the activities in this unit is:

A. Warm-ups

B. Improvised Situations

The teacher may find that these activities can be used throughout the remainder of the course.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- Participate actively in all activities as a performer or as a member of the audience
- Interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- Focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant
- Use sensory recall to define pertinent details
- Begin the use of props as an element in developing situation
- Begin to use vocalization as an element in developing character
- Begin to use dramatic structure in presenting an improvised situation

Suggested Activities and Procedures

A. Warm-ups

• **Group Mirror** — One student takes the playing area and begins a series of simple movements. Entire group mirrors the leader.

• **Detached Mirror** — Paired students do the mirror exercise with this change: Student A performs an action while B watches. B mirrors action, then begins a new one while A watches. They continue to alternate movement.

• **Machine for All Occasions** — Divide the class into small groups. A theme is selected by each group; e.g., New York City, committee meeting, dating. Each member contributes an action that helps to convey the theme by creating a staged mechanical picture. In "New York City," for example, there might be a shopper, a mugger, and a taxi driver. A shopper who carries bundles is walking along the street. Whenever he/she arrives at the corner, a mugger might hit him/her over the head. Meanwhile, downstage left, a taxi driver may be beeping a horn, yelling "Get out of my way!"

All movements must be kept mechanical and repetitive. Vocalization may be used. The effect should be that of mechanical human figures run by an unseen clock.

• **Monster** — Students create a monster as they have done previously in the activity immediately above, but the monster does not have rigid movements. Students should keep in mind the symmetrical nature of any living creature. The monster should be able to move.

• **Blind Move** — Students close eyes (or are blindfolded) and walk or crawl throughout the room, trying not to touch anyone. If they do touch, they must stay together and move that way. The game continues until all are stuck together and no one is left unattached.

• **Airport** — A runway is set up in the classroom.

One student is selected as pilot, another as control tower. The pilot is blindfolded, and obstacles (books, clothing, etc.) are placed in the runway. The control tower vocally guides the pilot down the runway. If the pilot hits an obstacle, the plane crashes. The game is over if the pilot crashes or if he/she completes the path.

• **No Hands** — Form groups of three or four. Each group decides on an object they can move without their hands (a car, a boulder, a piece of furniture). Each group, in turn, creates object for audience as they focus on moving it.

Variation: Students may use their hands and voices but may not name the object.

• **I'm Going on a Picnic** — Students sit in a circle. One begins by saying, "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring chicken." The next person repeats the first player's item and adds his/her own. This continues around the circle. If someone misses, a new series is begun. The objective is to make a complete rotation. If the group is too large, divide.

Variation: Going around the circle, the first person gives a number. The next person repeats the first number and adds his/her own (not in sequence), etc.

• **One Word Story** — Students sit in a circle and tell a story. Each person adds one word. The students should add words quickly, one after the other. A tape recorder might increase the fun.

Variation: This can also be done with a sentence per student.

• **Statues** — Divide the class in half. One half will be players, the other half will be observers. The players are to move through the room spontaneously, using whatever random or free-association movements they wish. Encourage the use of arm movements and full body movements as well as changes in pace. At some point, the teacher directs the group to "freeze." The observers collaborate and describe what each frozen player might have been doing. When each player has had an activity assigned, the group begins to move according to that activity. Players should verbalize and interact.

• **Changes** — Pair the students, A and B. The students are to assume random poses and freeze. Student A is to look at the two poses, one being his own, and decide upon a situation and relationship between them. They are then to break the poses and begin to improvise the situation. Even though Student B may not understand at first, he/she is to "play along" with A. At the first possible opportunity, B is to change the relationship and situations suggested by something that is done. (For example, a parent scolding a child may change to a teacher lecturing a student.) These changes continue. A situation may last only a few seconds or may develop over several minutes.

• **Poetry in Action** — Students are divided into groups of five, each assigned a number within the group. As the teacher begins to count slowly from one through five, Student #1 assumes a pose, followed by the other students in turn who pose in a way related to #1, thus creating a group statue. Once a statue has been formed, the teacher begins to count again. When #1 is called, that student slips out of the statue, looks at the others, and joins the statue in another place. This continues until a rhythm is established. Then the teacher can begin to use words (e.g., love, homework, aged) instead of numbers. The students move in sequence with each word that is called.

After an appropriate time, the groups are paired so that one group watches while another moves. The watching group is directed to write down words and phrases that occur to them while watching. After a reasonable time, the group stops; and the watching people organize their words and phrases into a composition (or poem).

Someone is chosen from the watching group to read while the group moves to the reading. After a pause, the reader is encouraged to reread the passage, emphasizing words or phrases that seem important. It may be effective to read the same passage three times.

Example of images suggested to one student:

acrobats	protection
holding something heavy	help me
contortion	fear
weeping	

Example of finished composition:

Contorted acrobats, holding something heavy, felt fear, cried "Help Me!" and wept.

• Collect a group of both common and unusual objects. After the students have had one or two minutes to study the objects, put the objects away and ask the students to write down the names of as many objects as they can recall. Compare these lists. Discuss why some objects appear on lists more often than others.

• Select a picture from a magazine or newspaper. After the students have had 60-90 seconds to study the picture, put it away and ask the students to write down the details they can recall. Compare the lists.

• Read a nursery rhyme to the class. Students should be asked to shut their eyes and imagine the characters, setting, and action while the teacher is reading. After the reading, ask the students what they visualized.

• Place an object in the center of a circle where all students can see it. Ask the students to look at the object for three or four minutes without speaking. Have them try to think of a story about the object and tell the story to the others.

• As a closing activity some day, have students stand in a circle, holding hands. All should close

their eyes. The teacher squeezes the hand of the person next to him/her. That person squeezes the hand of the next person and so on around the circle. Students are instructed to "pass the pulse" as rapidly as possible. After a few minutes, everyone will be passing the pulse at exactly the same time in a rhythmic, quickly paced beat. If this does not happen, reduce the number of people in the circle. When this game works, it produces a dynamic, unifying effect.

B. Improvised Situations

The teacher should stress dramatic structure when the students participate in the improvised situations. Although actions and reactions are not planned, each student should be able to answer the following questions before the improvisation begins:

About the setting: Where and when does this take place?

About the character: Who am I?

About the situation: What am I doing?

The answers to these questions should make up the *introduction* of the improvisation.

Remind students that *dramatic action is based on conflict.* The *development of conflict* must be included within the improvisation. Perhaps the students will know what the conflict is before they begin, or perhaps they will have to see what conflict evolves within the set of circumstances. Either way, the students should keep in mind that the *aim of the improvisation is to work toward the resolution of the conflict.* They should ask themselves:

What is the conflict?

What do I want?

Why do I want it?

How will I get it?

To introduce the improvised situation, the teacher might find it helpful to write those four questions on the board along with a setting, character(s), and situation. Then, each student could write answers to the questions asked, and student responses could be compared.

Examples:

dentist's office
mother and child
Mother is frightened, wants to hide anxiety.

street fair
two tourists, pickpocket
Pickpocket is working.

The following activities are all methods of presenting improvisation:

• Divide the class into groups of three. Each group is assigned a character, an object, and a place. One member will become the character, one will become the object, and one will become the place. The three students will improvise the scene without using verbal clues. Stress the importance of selecting pertinent details, especially for the two students suggesting the object and place.

Character	*Object*	*Place*
fisherman	fish	sea
woodcutter	saw	forest
child	kite	sky
old person	umbrella	rainy sidewalk
basketball player	basketball	basketball court
child	shovel	beach
window cleaner	window	scaffolding
bricklayer	bricks	construction site
gardener	bug spray	garden

• Divide the class into small groups. Show an object. Each group makes up an incident involving the object and improvises this incident. The following objects might be useful: old hat, cane, jewelry box, bell, pen knife, dog leash, foreign coin, teapot, fur earmuffs, paper cup.

• Divide the class into groups of three. Each group chooses an object from an assortment that has been placed on the table. The group is told that one of them dislikes the object, one likes the object, and one is neutral. During the course of the improvisation, one character changes his/her opinion. The change must be clearly motivated; that is, there must be a reason why someone changes his/her opinion.

• Place some small objects in a paper bag. After students are divided into groups, each group withdraws three objects from the bag. The group should plot a sequence of events and improvise a scene involving all three objects.

• Divide the class into groups of four or five. Each group is to select an environment, an activity that could take place within that environment, and the characters to operate within that environment. They begin to improvise a scene. After they are well into establishing the introduction, make an announcement that will change the *activity.* For example, if the students are improvising a classroom scene, announce a fire drill.

• Provide a variety of costume pieces. Have each student select an article of clothing. Group the students randomly. Each student in the group assumes the character suggested by the article he/she selected. The group must improvise a scene with those characters.

• Have each student bring in a newspaper headline. Divide the class into groups of four or five. Each group chooses one of the headlines and improvises a scene based on it.

• Divide the class into groups of five or more. Give each group a large sheet of paper with one of the following written on it: fair weather to rain, fair weather to strong winds, fair

weather to hail, etc. Tell students to keep those headings in mind. Then give students two minutes to brainstorm, listing all the places they can think of (beach, mountains, woods, etc.). After that, have them list all the groups of people they can think of (family, Girl Scouts, doctors, etc.) Next have them list activities to be done in fair weather (boating, picnicking, sunbathing, etc.). Finally, have them go back and choose one item from each category; e.g., Girl Scouts sunbathing at the beach.

The students are to improvise their activity. At some point, the teacher will change the weather condition and the students will react accordingly. They may not, however, end the improvisation until the teacher tells them to. The teacher's aim is to have the students sustain each activity in order to encourage activity and verbalization.

- Use the following environments or situations for total group improvisations:

Celebration such as a holiday or birthday

Airplane trip

Toyshop on Christmas Eve — Students are toys that haven't been sold.

Meeting of the student council

Scene of a disaster (fire, train wreck, flood)

Social event to which a new student has been invited and at which the host notices that something expensive is missing

- Each of the following situations concerns one student's individual desired outcome. Other students are selected to improvise the situation with him/her. It is suggested that students not be allowed to accomplish the desired outcome until the teacher gives a signal.

Person wants to control hiccups at formal dinner party.

New student wants acceptance in cafeteria.

Son or daughter wants to go somewhere; parents are against it.

Fan for visiting team wants his/her team to win.

Child wants piece of bubble-gum from machine but has no money.

Boy wants date but is afraid to ask.

English-speaking person needs directions from a group of foreigners.

Person needs back scratched in a place he/she cannot reach (library setting).

You have found an animal that mother will not let you keep.

A salesman wants to sell a vacuum cleaner to man or woman who already has one.

You want to borrow a friend's sweater. The friend will not let you have it.

Two people want to buy the same thing.

- Prepare cards of characters, settings, and special circumstances (see chart below). Groups of three students randomly pick one card from each category and improvise a scene.

Suggested Assessment

Because of the spontaneous nature of improvisational activities, no final project is suggested for this unit. If a daily participation chart has been used previously, the teacher may wish to continue in this manner.

The teacher might also utilize student self-evaluation and individual conferences to assess the student's attainment of the unit objectives.

CHARACTERS	SETTING	SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES
2 teenage boys, 1 teenage girl	1860's, Southern plantation	romance involving 1 character
2 adults, 1 teenager	present; deserted mansion	personal triumph for 1 character
2 teenagers from "wrong side of tracks," 1 wealthy adult	2000; Mars	misunderstanding between 2 characters
1 old person, 1 teenager, 1 child	present; gala party	a death involving 1 character
wealthy adult, poor adult, teenager	600 B.C., Rome	personal defeat for 1 character
2 friends, 1 enemy	1800's, western frontier	serious illness affects 1 character
parent, teenager, handicapped person	present; city ghetto	a murder
person from minority group, 1 bigot (2 people)	19th c. England, haunted castle	strange event affects life of 1 character
2 children, 1 teenager	1990; Earth	funny incident changes life of 1

Unit V. Final Play Selection

(Two Weeks)

Unit Overview

This unit completes the play selection process begun in Unit II. Theatre Games may be incorporated for part of each class period.

Performance Objectives

- participate actively in all activities
- interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- select several plays or scenes for production

Suggested Activities and Procedures

In this unit, a final choice of a play will be made. Whether the class will work on a one-act or several one-acts or on scenes, each student should read the plays under consideration, and an evaluative procedure should follow. (It may not be necessary to read a play completely before it can be evaluated.)

A. Production of One-Acts

In evaluating one-act plays, the students will utilize questions similar to those used in Unit II. Student responses can be written on a standard evaluation sheet. A sample evaluation sheet is included.

After each student has had sufficient time to evaluate several plays, the evaluation sheets should be shared. When several students are in agreement about the quality of a selection, plays can be either eliminated or more seriously considered. This process continues until final choices have been made. Throughout this procedure, the teacher should use his/her expertise to guide the class.

After the final selection has been made, the teacher orders copies of the play(s) and pays royalties, if necessary.

B. Production of Scenes

If scenes will be produced as the final activity, the procedure described above will be different. Students will have already read several plays. They should now be asked to complete evaluations of those plays and indicate which of the plays they wish to use as a final activity. The teacher will aid the student in the selection of an 8-15 minute scene. Following this, each student will give the class a brief description of the play and the characters in the scene. Every student should compile a list of roles he/she is interested in performing.

Suggested Assessment

The objectives for this unit are assessed from the students' completed evaluation sheets.

Sample Play Evaluation Sheet

NAME: _____

Name of Play				
No. of Roles **Male/Female** **Major/Minor**				
Possible **Audience**				
Length of **Performance**				
Necessary **Contributory** **Elements**				
Creative Potential for **Use of Contributory** **Elements**				
Approximate Cost: **Royalties, Scripts, and** **Contributory Elements**				
Comments on **Plot, Mood, Theme,** **Characters**				
Recommendation				
Highly Recommended				
Recommended				
Not Recommended				
Uncertain				

Unit VI. Vocal Interpretation
(Four Weeks)

Unit Overview

The unit on vocal interpretation provides activities designed to develop effective vocal communication. The student is guided in an exploration of various vocal techniques and helped to utilize them in extemporaneous and prepared speaking situations. Since this course is an introduction to dramatics, the emphasis of the unit is on the use of the voice to create the three elements of dramatic structure: character, situation, and mood. Students have already been exposed to dramatic structure in both pantomime and improvisation. This unit in vocal interpretation enlarges the performance experience to include the use of scripts.

The activities included are divided into four categories:

A. Vocal Warm-ups
B. Vocal Improvisation
C. Extemporaneous Presentations
D. Interpreting the Literary Work: Readers' Theatre, Story Theatre, or Radio Drama

The teacher may wish to incorporate the vocal warm-ups in the same manner that theatre games are used, that is, one or two exercises at the beginning of each class period. The teacher may further wish to integrate vocal warm-ups with improvisations by choosing a specific vocal skill to be emphasized within the improvisational activities. In this unit, as in previous units, activities begin with more elementary exercises and proceed to the more complex. In addition to those explained here, any of the games used in the unit on improvisation may be repeated within this unit. While the focus of this unit is on the use of the voice to convey character, mood, and situation, students should be reminded that in drama, words are not to be used as a substitute for action; words and action must be used together, for drama is meant to be seen *and* heard. This unit can provide students with the understanding that frequently people talk about one thing while doing another. To illustrate this point, the teacher may wish to have a student come to the front of the room and talk about a commonly known subject; e.g., "What is the real story of Lincoln's assassination?" While the student explains the story to the class, have him/her cut up fruit for salad or separate cards by color while he/she is speaking. When the student is finished, have the class discuss the relationship between what they saw and what they heard.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- participate actively in all activities as a performer or as a member of the audience
- focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant
- interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- utilize breath control, articulation, pitch variety, volume control, and timing effectively
- use appropriate expression to convey the meaning of words
- use appropriate expression to create mood
- use the voice to create character
- use facial expressions, body positions, and gestures to enhance vocal interpretation
- present a prepared oral presentation
- demonstrate a knowledge of the concepts of story theatre, readers' theatre, or radio drama
- evaluate the presentations of other students

Suggested Activities and Procedures

A. Vocal Warm-ups

Breath Control — The purposes of the following exercises are to expand the lung capacity and to control the flow of air used in speaking.

- Lie on your back on a firm surface. Place one hand on your abdomen and the other on your chest. Inhale; exhale. The chest should be still; the abdomen should move *out* when you *in*hale, *in* when you exhale.
- Take a deep breath and count aloud as you exhale. Try to count smoothly and without straining. When you grow tense, stop. Breathe again deeply and exhale slowly without counting. On the third deep inhalation, count again. Continue for a few minutes each day until you can count up to sixty without strain.
- Select a four-line verse or nursery rhyme such as "Jack Sprat" or "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Practice saying the four lines until you can say them slowly — *twice* on one breath — without strain.

• Inhale deeply and exhale sharply. Try to expel all of the air at one time while saying the word "pow" or "blow."

• Inhale and exhale like a panting dog.

• Stand at arm's length from a wall, feet comfortably placed together. Place your hands flat against the wall and breathe deeply. Hold the breath and slowly bend your elbows and move to touch the wall with nose or forehead. Slowly straighten arms, still holding breath. Try to increase the number of "push-aways" both while breath is being held and while it is being expelled.

• Stand with hands on knees. By pushing on knees, try to force feet through the floor. Push hard. Harder. (Strain for no more than five seconds.) Straighten. Breathe. Relax. Repeat.

• Stand with arms above the head. Pretend that you are straining to keep a huge trash truck from crushing your head. Strain. Harder. (Sustain straining for no more than five seconds.) Breathe. Relax. Repeat.

Voice Quality — The purpose of these exercises is to help students recognize that the best quality of any voice comes from a relaxed, open throat which allows the air to flow easily, as though nothing were stopping it.

• Have students relax and close their eyes, pretending they have fallen asleep in class. Students should drop their heads forward and let their jaws drop open. Slowly, they should roll their heads in a circle (around, not front to back) — keeping their faces, necks, and jaws relaxed.

• Direct the students to yawn and relax. Have them read together Alfred Noyes's "Forty Singing Seamen" or Poe's "The Bells." Have students stretch and yawn lazily. Tell them to breathe deeply, stretch, and yawn again. With the throat open and relaxed, they should quietly and slowly say the following sounds:

ma-a-a-ma-a-a
oh-o-o-ah-a-a-a
blow-o-o-ah-a-a-a-o
aye-ee-oo-oo-ee-aye-e-e
a-a-a-ah-o-o-oh-h-h
ah-wah-wah-ah-h-h

Pitch Variety — The purpose of the suggested activities is to develop variety of pitch, and to use pitch to suggest emotions.

• Have a student read the following sentences aloud at the pitch level suggested by the words:

I am to begin speaking about nothing at all at my natural pitch and then slowly slide upward. Higher, higher, higher, higher, my voice on tip-toe. Now I tumble a little. Now I fall-l-l-l down, down, down. Lower. Deep into the lowest pit, I sink.

• Have various students say the word "ouch" to convey the meaning indicated. (They should keep in mind that changing the pitch while voicing a single word can give the word various "meanings" — a rising inflection suggests questioning or doubt; a falling inflection, finality; a combination of the two, sarcasm, innuendo, or puzzlement.)

Ouch (pain)
Ouch ("put-down" accepted)
Ouch (questioningly)
Ouch (anger and pain combined)
Ouch (nervously)

Other words, such as "dear," "oh," "little," "no," "yes," "maybe," and "cold," may be spoken in a variety of pitches to convey a variety of meanings.

• Mirror Sound: Pair off students. Have the first student say a name like "Mary Ellen" to convey an attitude of dislike, pleasure, doubt, or questioning. The second student should repeat the name, trying to reflect the pitch exactly. Using the same name, the second student should now state the name to reflect a different attitude, and the first student should repeat the name. (Continue "Mirrors" until a wide range of pitch has been practiced.)

• Opera: Divide classes into groups of four or five. Have students take turns directing and singing a nursery rhyme, a personal experience, or a series of directions for making something. As the singer sings, the other group members (one at a time at set intervals or signals) direct the singer to raise or lower his or her voice to the level suggested by the director's hand. Divide class into groups of three. (Give each member of the group a card on which a word is written. Without conferring with others in the group, one member of the group should state his/her word in such a manner as to convey a particular meaning. The second student should endeavor to say his/her assigned word as if in response to the first student. The third student should, in turn, "respond" to the first or second student. Neither cards nor students should be numbered. Card groups may be in any combination; for example:

Yes/Yes/No
Say/What/No
Well/Maybe/Yes

• Using a single statement, have the students explore different meanings through pitch variation. Have the students communicate each of the following *meanings* while saying, "Are you telling me that I have to sing a solo?"

Why are *you* telling me?
Are you *telling* or *requesting* me to sing solo?
I have to sing?
I *have* to sing? (No choice. Required.)
A *solo*?
Great! I'm thrilled to do it!
Disbelief. (You can't mean it.)

Only *one*? (I had thought I'd be asked to do all the solos!)

• Have students count from one to ten, raising the pitch on each number. Then have them count from ten to one, dropping the pitch. Be sure that students *say*, not *sing*, the numbers.

Volume Control — The purpose of the suggested activities is to develop controlled volume.

• Have a student speak to the far wall, to someone outside the window, and to someone across a noisy street. (Student should not shout.)

• Have one student face another student and begin a conversation. As the conversation continues, have the students step farther and farther apart until they are on opposite sides of the room.

• Have students count from one to ten, raising the volume on each number. Then have them count from ten to one, decreasing the volume. All sounds must be heard, and no one may shout.

Rate Variation — The purpose of the following activities is to develop the ability to vary rate by prolonging the sound of a word or clipping it short, as well as by pausing just before or after a word to emphasize it, and to recognize that the speed at which one talks or reads suggests age and meaning.

• Have students practice the following sentences, employing pause, limitation or extension of sound, and variation of rate as meaning or punctuation suggests.

He yawned, stretched, and drowsily inched toward the door.

Slowly, wearily they clawed their way to the top.

She danced into the room and joyously flung herself into his strong, brown arms.

I am proud and deeply touched to accept this honor from those I esteem so highly.

I watered the plant and wound the clock for love of Anne.

• Count from one to twenty, beginning very slowly and increasing your rate until you are speaking as rapidly as you can. Then reverse: begin rapidly and end at a slow pace.

Articulation and Pronunciation — The purpose of these activities is to have students improve their attention to pronunciation and enunciation.

• Have students check their pronunciation of the following words against the dictionary's diacritical marks:

wear	poor	weather	get
where	route	whether	except
formerly	ate	suite	accept
formally	hate	worst	for
your	ladder	sure	conscious
chic	latter	because	conscience
assume	celery	what	just
new	salary	watt	again
which	catch	statue	wonder
win	precede	stature	affect
when	proceed	wander	effect

Have students write a paragraph using ten of the above words and read it aloud. The class listens for correct pronunciation.

• Have students practice tongue twisters. They should open their mouths wide and learn to say the phrases clearly before concerning themselves with speed.

Six slim sleek silver saplings stood starkly against the stormy sky.

A big black bear bit a bitsy black bug behind the bug's back.

Please pack and post the parcel.

The shepherd suffered shots in the shoulder.

Little Lilly liked to look at lush, limpid lambs lolling near the lake.

Pat, please stop tip-tapping on your typewriter.

If you delay longer, we're likely to be late.

Bring your grandmother's gong along.

Apparently, the representative is appealing for support.

Charles, feeling righteous, hid the hatchet under the batch of peaches in the kitchen.

B. Vocal Improvisation

Spin a Yarn

Before class, wind a ball of yarn, using strands of yarn of various lengths. In class, have a group of eight to ten students sit on the floor in a circle, and have one student begin a story. While he/she is telling the story, he/she begins unwinding the ball of yarn at a normal pace. When the student reaches the end of his/her string, the ball is passed to the person on his/her left, who continues the story and begins unwinding the yarn, continuing until *his/her* strand has been unraveled. The game continues until the ball is completely gone.

The story should be interesting to listen to and should include fantastic and imaginative ideas. Students may use either dialogue or narration, and attempts should be made to interpret characters vocally.

Quarrels

Divide the students into pairs, and give each pair a beginning statement. Students will argue in a real-life manner; i.e., beginning a verbal disagreement that grows into an angry discourse in which tempers are lost. Students must listen to what their partners are saying and respond to the words, developing feelings realistic to that situation. This activity can be done with students either playing themselves or taking on the roles of characters. It is important that students concentrate on building defensiveness and anger and that they maintain

their positions and do not give in to their partners. The teacher should decide when the activity is over.

- "Gloria (Michael), in the ten years we've been married, you've changed."
  "Well, so have you."
- "If you hadn't been so careless, this wouldn't have happened in the first place!"
  "Me? You left the house last."
- "Where have you been? I've been waiting for you."
  "Well, I had to go to the store and run *your* errand!"
- "You never like anything I make."
  "Me? What about you!"
- "Don't you ever say anything nice?"
  "Ha! God's gift to women!"
- "I told you never to say that again."
  "And why not? Can't I express an opinion?"
- "Here, let me do it!"
  "When I asked you to help, you were too busy!"
- "You never like any of my friends."
- "Turn off that TV!"
- "Why do you always wear brown?"
- "We are NOT going to the mountains, we are going to the shore."
- "Where did you get this recipe?"
- "You want to know how my day was? I'll tell you how my day was."
- "You were driving too fast."
- "I told you so."
- "You're always eating — munch, munch, munch."
- "What gives you the right to criticize my work?"
- "I'll tell you what's wrong. I'm sick and tired of the way you waste money!"
- "How come whenever Peter does anything wrong he's *my* son?"
- "Why don't you ever help clean up?"
- "That is the dumbest thing I've ever heard in my life!"
- "The problem with you is that you're insensitive!"
- "Why don't YOU cook dinner for a change?"
- "I don't want to go to the party!"

What's in a Word?

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate that the meanings of words can be indicated by the way the words are spoken.

Divide the class into small groups of six to eight students. Establish a situation and ask students to determine a character and a mood they will convey to the audience. Then give each student a word, phrase, or sentence which will be the only thing spoken during the situation. By varying vocal qualities, students are to establish their characters and their predominant moods.

Example:

The situation takes place at an airport. Decide who you are and why you are there. Possible roles: baggage attendant, ticket seller, pilot, flight attendant, air tower controller, traveler, maintenance worker, flower child.

Examples of words:

"I don't know." "What time is dinner?" "Trenton is the capital of New Jersey." "It's going to rain tomorrow." "I'll cry tomorrow." "Jackrabbits have tails." "Rush hour is a pain to drive in." "Orange or yellow?" "Spain is in Europe."

As the scene begins, the teacher will announce the following: "May I have your attention, please? I'm sorry to inform you that all outgoing flights have just been cancelled. We regret this inconvenience." Have the students continue to interact, using only the words assigned, by reacting to the teacher's announcement.

The phrase may be used to ask such questions as: Why were they there? Why were the flights cancelled? How do they feel about the cancellations? What will they do now? etc. Sidecoaching can be very helpful in this activity. Students should not be allowed to talk all at once, to the same person, but should rather be encouraged to use the whole playing area and present varieties of reactions their characters might have in that situation.

Suggestions for situations:

- carnival (The ferris wheel collapses.)
- a garage sale (where two women bought the same item)
- a class reunion (Officials are about to announce alumnae of the year.)
- surprise birthday party (Guest of honor wasn't told to come.)
- auditions for a talent show (Finalists are about to be announced.)
- bank (Robbery is committed.)
- tenants' meeting (Landlord is about to close the building.)
- department store at Christmas (Blizzard occurs.)

Gibberish

There are many variations of gibberish games. The idea of these games is that the words the students use are nonsense sounds and syllables, but the meaning of the action must be conveyed through vocal expression of those sounds and pantomime. It is difficult for students to speak in gibberish. Therefore, it is suggested that they have more than one opportunity to perform. A demonstration is also highly recommended.

Activities:

- **Blob** — One student is the blob and the other the "craftsman." Have one student sit in a chair

limply. Have the second student come to the front of the room, create a situation by talking about something in gibberish, and then mold the person's body into an object that relates to the situation. The class should be able to understand what the situation is and what kind of object the blob is. For example, a student comes on stage and talks (in gibberish) about how hot it is and that there are still two innings left to play. He/she walks over to the blob, shapes the person's body into a 5 gallon thermos jug, and presses his/her nose to draw a drink.

Suggestions for objects:

TV set
radio
refrigerator
telephone booth
piggy bank
packing box
playpen
target
lamp
mannequin

• **I Understand** — Two players enter the playing area. One of the players knows what the situation is; the other does not. The player who knows what the situation is begins to talk in gibberish and pantomime an action. One player is to try to convey to the other player who she/he is and what he/she is doing. When the second player feels that he/she understands what the first player is saying, doing, and how she/he is involved, he/she may begin responding in English. If the player is wrong about the situation, the first player must continue to use gibberish. If the second player is correct, then the first player switches from gibberish to English.

Example:

Two players are in chairs on the playing area. One player begins to explain in gibberish that they are going to play a piece of music beginning from the third measure of the second movement; the player sets up music stands and music, explains the music, and hands the second player an instrument. When the second player realizes he/she is going to play an instrument, he/she can enter into the situation in English, perhaps saying something like, "I have always believed the second is meant to be played more slowly." The first player can respond, in English, "Yes, but not as slowly as you are playing it."

Suggestions for characters:

two mountain climbers
two chefs
artist and a subject
dentist and a patient
priest and altar boy
mother and child
carpenter and helper
salesperson and customer
coach and player

• **Sales** — Have each student come to the front of the room and try to sell the class a product, speaking only in gibberish. The pantomime should include a demonstration of the product in which special features and the uses of the product are stressed. At the end of the demonstration, students in the class may ask questions about the product in gibberish, and the salesperson must answer their concerns. If a question is misunderstood, it should be asked again. All communication is in gibberish.

Suggestions of items to sell:

camera
TV
candy
kites
nail polish
shoes
refrigerator
peanut butter
puppy
reclining chair

Talking Pictures

Have students find a picture at home that has no more than three people in it. Ask them to project themselves into the picture as one of the characters and imagine all they can about the characters, the mood, and the situation. Have them bring their pictures to class, with permission.

In class, have each student choose members of the class (as required by the picture) to improvise a scene suggested by the picture. These students are to look at the picture but may not discuss their reactions to it. Each person should indicate which character he/she will portray and will project himself/herself into the character, mood, and situation.

To begin these scenes, students are to set the stage as indicated in the picture. The players will begin in the same physical positions, with the same facial expressions. When everyone is ready, the action will be initiated by the picture's owner. He/she moves first, continuing the action and the dialogue that he/she believes has been taking place in the picture. The characters created should talk, move, and behave as one would expect from looking at the picture. After the students have completed their scene, the class should be shown the picture and a comparison should be made.

Example:

Norman Rockwell's picture of a girl painting at an easel. A country codger is bending down, looking over her shoulder.

Variations:

If a student chooses to use a portrait, the student

must decide to whom the person is speaking and about what he/she is talking. It does not have to be a person talking to an artist. Example: In "American Gothic" by Grant Wood, the situation could be that Martha and Sam are discussing with a tax collector the rising costs of raising pigs.

Layers

Pair the students. (If there is one extra student, there may be one group of three.) Each pair is to write a very simple dialogue which has no emotional content and gives each student two lines.

Example:

A - "Coffee?"
B - "Yes."
C - "Cream?"
B - "No, thanks."

Layer a). General attitude, disposition. Each student is to determine individually his/her general attitude. For example, Student A may decide to be tired. Student B may decide to be excited. Have the students write their choices. Then have them say the lines, communicating their attitude.

Layer b). Feelings toward another person. Students are then to decide individually how they feel toward their partner/s — envious, resentful, friendly, eager to please, etc. They add this layer to Layer a) ; and when the words are spoken again, there are now two layers influencing how the words are said. Example: "Coffee?" (said in tired tone, enviously).

Layer c). Age. Students individually determine their ages and add this layer to the other two.

Layer d). Social Status. Students individually determine whether they are rich, poor, middle class, aristocratic, etc., and add this layer to the others.

Layer e). Setting. Students decide together where the dialogue takes place — outside on a cold day, inside, while camping, etc. With this layer, the students will add pantomime to suggest physical items.

At the end of this series, Student A might be a tired, middle-class person of 30 who loves the person he/she is talking to. Student B might be an excited, poor child of eight who can't stand the person he/she is talking to. They may be camping.

Some combinations may be difficult to work with. Therefore, encourage the students to try *different* combinations, noting those that are successful.

When all have tried the activity, select one pair to present a fully layered dialogue to the class. The same pair might then be asked to change one of the layers, and the class would try to discover the change and discuss the differences between this dialogue and the first.

The pair might also be asked to continue the dialogue, using the characterizations established.

Telling the Story

This activity provides a link between pantomime and narration, gives each student a chance to verbalize the motivation of a character, and provides a building block for storytelling and story theatre.

Prepare slips of paper with activities written on them. Each activity has one obstacle that complicates the situation. Example: You are typing a paper which must be completed in an hour. Everything is going well until a key becomes stuck.

A student selects an activity at random. He/she goes to the playing area and performs a full pantomime of the activity. While the student is pantomiming the activity, he/she verbalizes his/her thoughts. In the example above, the student might say:

"Gee, I've got to hurry. I have only an hour left. I'm so tired. I've been up all night, but at least I'm almost finished. I think I'm getting my second wind. Oh, this darn key is stuck again. Oh, no, it won't budge! I can't pry it loose. What will I do? If I can't finish this paper on time, I'll fail the course. This is the story of my life. . . ."

Following this, the students in the audience might discuss what the performer has revealed about himself/herself and whether any story line developed; and they might make suggestions for improving the story.

The performer is to try the scene again, this time with less overt movement and more reliance on narration, as if he/she were telling the audience a story.

This may be extended to a prepared anecdote in which the student develops a rather detailed narration of a situation accompanied with mime. If an anecdote is used, students should submit outlines or detailed summaries of their presentations which can be used as assessments.

Suggestions for situations:

- You are a youngster on the way to school in the morning. You are not at all excited about going. Suddenly you come upon a mud puddle. You are quite happy about this mud puddle. Next you walk all the way around it before you decide to jump in.
- You are changing a tire on your car. You are not at all happy about this. You go through the whole process of changing the tire. As you are lowering your car after the completion of the task, you realize that the tire you've just put on the car is defective — it is still flat from a previous puncture.
- You are a very small person who is fishing in a stream. You have had no bites all day. You finally snag one fish that is considerably too large for you to handle.
- You are a very fat golfer. You have an eight-foot putt on an important hole. After going through the

preliminary preparations for the shot, you take your putter in hand and sink the shot.

• You are a paratrooper about to jump from a plane. You are not at all eager about this; in fact, you're quite frightened! You are just about to jump from the airplane when you realize that your parachute has opened behind you.

• You are a rather young child. You have just been told that you are not allowed to take a cookie from the cookie jar. When there is nobody present, however, you decide to take a cookie anyway. You climb up to the place where the jar is. Just as you are reaching into the jar, you are caught in the act.

• You are a little old lady shopping in the produce department of a grocery store. After squeezing everything in sight, you finally pick up a plastic lemon and unwittingly squirt lemon juice into your eyes!

• You have just bought a brand new suit. You walk confidently and proudly outside for the first time in the new suit. You find that it is raining. You attempt to open your umbrella. Unfortunately, the wind is strong, and your umbrella is blown out of shape.

• You are a fencer. In the midst of a furious duel, you find that your sword has been knocked from your grasp.

C. Extemporaneous Presentations

The activities in this section provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate effective vocal techniques in combination with facial and body expression. The teacher may choose one or more of these activities as a means of assessing student attainment of objectives. The teacher might also allow students to choose an activity from the alternatives given.

The nature of the activities in this section of the unit makes the use of a tape recorder highly desirable. In practicing their selections, students should be encouraged to use a tape recorder to play back their practice sessions, listening for strengths to incorporate in their final presentations. Tape recording of a practice session enables students to keep track of what they are doing well and what they should improve. At the same time, students should remember that they should not memorize their work.

Telling the Story

See activity about the cookie jar in Part B of this unit for an explanation of an extended presentation.

I Speak for You

In this exercise, the student gives a monologue from the point of view of an object.

Give students time to consider what objects they are going to be, what the objects would say if they could speak, what the voices and personalities would be like, and how the students are going to use their bodies physically to represent the objects. Each student will present his/her monologue to the class.

While it may be helpful for the student to write out a monologue to direct his/her thoughts toward what the object's personality and attitude towards its "job" might be, this monologue should not be memorized. Students should understand that memorized performances would lack spontaneity and that the speaker might concentrate on remembering the words rather than on the feelings and attitudes behind those words.

Suggestions for objects:

floor	straight-back chair
mug	rolling pin
flower vase	boat
wall	flashlight
clock	basketball
cage	light bulb
telephone	guitar
easy chair	egg beater

Example — A student selects a parking meter as the object. The student gives the impression that parking meters complain a lot. "Wait a minute! Don't go yet! You should have put in a quarter! Cheapskate! A lousy dime. Dimes don't taste as good as quarters."

"My feet are killing me! I should have worn my boots. It looks like rain. I wish I were one of those twin meters. Twins stick together! They have it easy. They keep each other company and care about each other, while I'm stuck here all alone. Don't think about that! Think about something else! I wonder how Fred's doing? Rumor has it he was transferred to Capitol Hill. Now that's a promotion. Probably in charge of some big lobbyist's car. Some guys have all the breaks. There! That's the last minute of that cheapskate's time! I hope a cop comes soon!"

Salesmanship

The general purpose of a sales speech may be either to convince your audience to buy your product or to play the role of a stereotyped salesperson.

Before class, each student is to write an outline for a sales pitch and prepare visual aids to be used. The outline should include main ideas about the product, but under no circumstances should the student write out the pitch completely.

Suggested Outline Form:

I. Introduction

A. Capture audience's attention in either an original, creative manner or a stereotypic routine, depending upon your purpose.

B. Motivate the audience to listen to the rea-

sons why they need this product. That is, relate the value of this product to the needs (real or exaggerated) of the listening audience.

II. Body

A. Be sincere and tell the audience:

1. How the product works
2. What the product is made of
3. What colors and/or styles are available
4. Special features
5. Guarantees
6. Cost
7. Why it's superior to other similar products

B. Demonstrate the product.

1. Show how wonderful your product is.
2. Compare your product's effectiveness to Brand X.
3. Pass out free samples, discount coupons.

C. Spend time on the cost factor.

1. State the price and tell where the audience can get the product.
2. Explain any discounts, special offers, etc.
3. Tell your audience whether you will accept orders right away.

III. Conclusion

A. Review the important features.

B. Review why the product is particularly valuable to the needs of your audience.

C. Ask your audience to take action and buy your product.

The student should be instructed to "rehearse" his/her presentation several times before coming to class. Emphasize the idea that the speech will never be presented in the same manner twice. The goal is a fluent delivery which convinces the audience that they *need* that product. Students should practice talking and working with the product at the same time.

Suggestions for topics

- Smokey the Bear selling fire insurance
- Lou Adidas selling Converse Shoes
- electric hairdryer
- electric toothbrush
- electric shoeshine kit
- stain remover
- fondue pot
- electric knife
- tape recorder
- household cleaner
- kitchen gadgets
- pens
- Christmas cards
- toys
- blender
- coffee
- wallet
- organizers, a beauty bag
- used cars
- Coke
- small appliances: popcorn popper, hamburger cooker, etc.
- airline tickets
- encyclopedias

Story-telling

The student may tell a story based on a personal experience; family background; or a folktale, myth, fable that has been read.

Although memorization is discouraged, the student should have an outline of the story to be told. This outline might include references to the Introduction (setting, character, mood); development of the Conflict; and Resolution. As an introduction to the story itself, the student may also wish to include a description of the circumstances in which he/she heard the story.

The following is a list of suggestions that should be discussed with the students before they begin this activity.

- Choose a story that you enjoy telling. You must want to tell it. Even if many other people like a story that you do not understand nor enjoy, you should not use it. Consider your audience when making your selection.
- Know the story so well that you cannot possibly forget it. Visualize each event and character so that you feel as though you have lived the experience.
- Outline the sequence of events, including any key words or phrases you wish to remember.
- Practice telling the story aloud, using your own language. Avoid attempts to memorize.
- Pay particular attention to using your voice. Vary the pitch, the volume, the pace so that your story comes alive.
- Use pauses to indicate suspense or to allow an important fact to "sink in."
- Use body responses and facial expression to enhance the words.
- Rehearse by taping your story. Listen for clear differences in your voice when characters, moods, or events change.
- Try to relax in an informal atmosphere when you tell your story.

D. Interpreting the Literary Work: Readers' Theatre, Story Theatre, Radio Drama

The fourth part of this unit introduces students to vocal interpretation defined in part by a dramatic structure imposed by a literary work. Whether the teacher decides to use Readers' Theatre, Story Theatre, or Radio Drama for a culminating activity, this is the first time students' projections of character, situation, and mood are based upon what has been written as well as what they themselves create. In deciding which activity to use, the teacher should consider his/her personal strengths and the class's ability, interest, and maturity level. Because class time is limited, it is recommended that the teacher choose the material early and have the literature available at the beginning of the vocal interpretation unit. Student groups should be organized either by the teacher or by student choice. The number of participants in each group will depend upon the number of players per selection; keep in mind that students can play more than one part and that minor parts can be doubled.

Although they differ, all three activities are similarly related to vocal interpretation. All are heavily dependent upon the performer's ability to create word pictures that stimulate the audience's imagination, thoughts, and feelings. All are concerned with the re-creation of literature. The literature is no longer communicated by the author to the audience but rather by the author, *through* the performer, to the audience.

The following chart is a visual representation comparing the three literary forms:

Readers' Theatre	Story Theatre	Radio Drama
1. Literature itself is the most important element.	1. The dramatization is as important as the literature itself.	1. Literature itself is the most important element.
2. Material may be short stories, poetry, essays — anything adapted which retains original style and content.	2. ST utilizes children's literature, fairy tales, myths, fables, Thurber sketches, literature with a singular plot.	2. Mysteries, westerns, horror stories, science fiction — anything with highly evocative language and visual imagery is suited to RD.
3. In adaptation of a work to script form, author's words and style must be retained.	3. The adapter may or may not choose to retain the author's words and style.	3. It is the adapter's choice whether to retain the author's words, and style is dependent upon the aural quality of the literature.
4. Sub-plots may be included.	4. Single plots are recommended.	4. Single plots are recommended.
5. Character development is in part determined by the background details supplied in the author's original work.	5. Less background given in ST than in RT; characterizations are stereotypes and archetypes.	5. Little background is given; characterizations are stereotypes and archetypes.
6. RT uses narration and dialogue.	6. ST uses narration and dialogue.	6. Announcer and dialogue constitute the vocal components of RD.
7. There is limited movement. Use of movement should be selective.	7. ST utilizes broad expressive movements.	7. There is no movement; sound effects suggest movement.
8. There is selective use of pantomime.	8. There are broad, expressive pantomimed movements.	8. Not applicable
9. RT makes very minimal use of costumes, sets, properties.	9. ST makes minimal use of costumes, sets, properties.	9. Not applicable
10. Lighting and sound effects can be used as substitutes for scene changes and/or movement as well as to create mood.	10. Lighting and sound can be used to supplement stage action.	10. Sound effects greatly enhance performance.
11. Memorization is not essential.	11. Memorization is essential for all characters except a narrator.	11. Memorization is not required.
12. Staging is limited primarily to the aesthetic arrangement of platforms and/or chairs.	12. Artistic, effective blocking is important in good ST.	12. Proper placement of microphones is essential.

The descriptions of the individual activities that follow will provide definitions and summaries of outstanding characteristics. This information is intended only as an introduction to production.

Each activity has its own specialized vocabulary that should be defined, understood, and incorporated in production (e.g., Readers' Theatre: on stage/off stage focus, point of view, involved/detailed narrator, focal point of the literature; Story Theatre: stereotypes, archetypes, caricatures, improvisations; Radio Drama: ad lib, aside, bridge, come on). It is suggested that the teacher begin with the information included here and then make a more thorough investigation of the activity chosen.

Readers' Theatre

Readers' Theatre is a group activity in which literature is communicated to an audience through vocal interpretation and physical suggestion. The primary concern of the reader is the recitation of the literature. The readers carefully select vocal elements and physical gestures which stimulate the audience's imagination and convey the author's style and intent.

Scripts for Readers' Theatre are usually adapted from other literary forms: poetry, essays, plays, novels, short stories, diaries, letters. High quality literature is required, with compelling characters, evocative language, intriguing conflicts, vital themes, and a sense of wholeness — whether the complete work or only a part of it is used. Purpose of the presentation, length of performance, available talent, and the audience all influence the adaptation.

Traditionally, Readers' Theatre minimizes the use of contributory theatre elements; i.e., costumes, props, scenery, makeup, and lighting. It challenges the imagination of the audience member to supply the visual details. Memorization, common in play production, is altered in Readers' Theatre. Although readers must be highly familiar with the lines — or may even have memorized the lines to facilitate eye contact, scripts are retained. The script is a symbol of Readers' Theatre, and often may be used imaginatively to suggest properties — for example, a serving tray, a jewelry box, a newspaper, a passport, etc. Also, unlike plays, productions for RT are staged simply, with readers standing or sitting, using limited movement.

The techniques used in presenting Readers' Theatre — aesthetic and purposeful arrangement of the stage and characters, the use of on and off stage focus, the role of the narrator — will be varied according to the needs of the literature and the preferences of the director. The sources suggested below discuss the use of these techniques as well as offering suggestions of literature successfully adapted for Readers' Theatre:

Readers' Theatre Handbook by Leslie Irene Coger and Melvin R. White

Creative Communication: Junior High Projects in Acting, Speaking, Oral Reading by Fran Averett Tanner

Story Theatre

Story Theatre is a form of drama which incorporates narration, pantomime, broad expressive movements, optional use of contributory effects, and memorization (except for a narrator).

Careful selection of the literature is necessary. Stories with a single conflict as the central situation, obvious action, and stereotypic fairy tales and folk tales make excellent sources of material, as do myths, fables, legends, Thurber sketches, and short stories by Twain. This literature tends to be light in mood and easy to follow. When the stylized dramatic performance is added, children become a prime audience for story theatre performances.

In dramatizing the story, the retention of a narrative voice is characteristic of Story Theatre's form. This may be accomplished in any of the following ways:

- Narrator tells entire story; players perform the actions of the narrator's speech.
- Narrator reads only narration; players perform actions and say their own dialogue.
- Players narrate their own actions in either first or third person to the audience and relate to other characters through actions and dialogue.

Once a narrative style is chosen, other qualities of the dramatization can be devised. Story Theatre calls for all movements to be exaggerated, broad, and expressive of the action. Pantomime and improvisation techniques are used in staging the story. Big, overextended, overplayed gestures and crosses carry the action at a rapid, enthusiastic tempo.

Finally, contributory effects, particularly costuming, properties, makeup, and lighting may enhance the total performance, but they should not "upstage" the dramatization itself.

Radio Drama

Radio Drama is a form of theatre in which the actors' voices are the primary instruments for communicating literature to an audience. The only contributory elements added to vocal interpretation are music and sound effects. A student's ability to communicate emotional and psychological states to an audience is completely dependent upon the use of auditory stimuli.

Although it is possible to adapt any literary work to radio drama, the most commonly used scripts are westerns, science fiction, and mysteries. These types of literature leave much to the imagination of the audience. Any material used for a radio drama should allow for this kind of audience participation.

Four production aspects important to radio drama are tempo, musical bridges and sound effects, the announcer, and taping.

• Tempo

Because the radio audience member is reliant solely upon what he/she hears, particular care must be given to tempo. Tempo is the rhythmic quality of voices that builds and heightens dramatic intensity in the literature. It is particularly important to Radio Drama that the internal builds in the dialogue be determined and transmitted to the audience. A performance that does not include tempo will cause the audience to lose interest rapidly. The following should be considered in evaluating the tempo of a production:

Do the students pick up cues and overlap cues?

Are dialogue exchanges which are examples of one-up-manship (topping) identified by vocal builds?

Does the production have rhythm? Does it reach heights and depths? Does it rise and fall in intensity?

Are there places where energy is increased? Decreased?

Have effective pauses been included?

• Musical Bridges and Sound Effects

The second aspect of Radio Drama that requires additional consideration is the use of musical bridges and sound effects. Students may enjoy gathering their own music and sound effects. It is important that all background effects be carefully prepared, specifically that the sound effects are clearly representative of the imagined performance and are set up before taping in the order that they will be utilized. It would be helpful to have one student, possibly the announcer, responsible for producing the effects during the production. Music will add mood and establish auditory continuity in a production. Adding background music that matches the heightened moments of the drama is very effective. The repetition of a musical theme can prepare the audience for the beginnings and ends of scenes and/or indicate that a specific character is about to enter the situation. It is important that the music selected be carefully evaluated as to how well it relates to the story's action.

• The Announcer

Third, the role of an announcer is especially important in Radio Drama. The announcer's role is written into the script. He/she introduces the story, providing background information about the characters, situation, and mood; re-enters the story to break and summarize the action around commercial words, if any; and indicates that the ending of the story has occurred. The announcer verbalizes the act and scene structure of the drama. His/her role can be most important in unifying the drama.

• Taping

The final aspect that requires special consideration in working on Radio Drama is taping procedures. Students should rehearse continually with a tape recorder. Ideally, they should begin by spending one-third of their time taping, one-third playing the recording back, and one-third discussing their efforts. After work progresses, more time can be spent recording and listening. Before a final tape is made, experiments with sound effects and music should be conducted and the effectiveness of these should be evaluated.

Suggested Assessment

The teacher may wish to continue recording the students' participation, cooperation, and self-confidence on a daily basis or hold individual conferences to discuss objectives with the students.

In addition, one of the planned presentations may be used as a final evaluation for assessing the student's attainment of the unit's objectives. The suggested procedures for these activities include the student's preparation of an outline or descriptive summary. These may be used as assessment tools. Also, a sample teacher evaluation form is attached for use during the presentation itself. This form includes sections for evaluating elements other than voice in a Readers Theatre, Story Theatre, or Radio Drama presentation. The grade analysis shown is for the vocal interpretation.

Audience members may also be given evaluation forms to complete which the teacher might collect and distribute to the performers. A sample student evaluation form is attached.

Sample Teacher Evaluation of Vocal Interpretation

	G	A	P
Stage Presence			
Eye Contact			
Breath Control			
Volume			
Articulation			
Pitch			
Rate of Delivery			
Vocal Expression for Mood/Meaning			
Facial Expression			
Body Postures/Gestures			
Characterization			
READERS' THEATRE			
Preparation			
Group Unity			
Appropriate Literary Choice			
Script Adaptation (if applicable)			
Aesthetic Use of Space			
Appropriate Movement			
Appropriate Use of Contributory Elements			
Enthusiasm and Interest			
Subtotal ____			

	G	A	P
STORY THEATRE			
Preparation			
Group Unity			
Appropriate Literary Choice			
Script Adaptation			
Aesthetic Blocking			
Broad, Exaggerated Movement			
Appropriate use of Contributory Elements			
Enthusiasm and Interest			
RADIO DRAMA			
Preparation			
Group Unity			
Appropriate Literary Choice			
Script Adaptation (if applicable)			
Tempo			
Sound Effects			
Musical Bridges			
Enthusiasm and Interest			
Subtotal ____			
Total ____			

Good = 3
Average = 2
Poor = 1

54-60 = A
48-53 = B
42-47 = C
36-41 = D

Sample Student Evaluation of Interpretation

_____ (name of performer)

_____ (teacher's name)

Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of each of the following elements of the performer's vocal interpretation.

Stage Presence:
- uncertain _____
- very nervous and self-conscious _____
- nervous and self-conscious _____
- fairly relaxed and comfortable _____
- relaxed and comfortable _____

Eye Control:
- uncertain _____
- none _____
- some _____
- frequent _____

Breath Control:
- uncertain _____
- strained _____
- strained at times _____
- unstrained _____

Volume:
- uncertain _____
- too soft _____
- too loud _____
- not varied enough _____
- varied _____
- ineffective _____
- effective _____

Articulation:
- uncertain _____
- very difficult to understand _____
- sometimes difficult to understand _____
- easy to understand _____

Pronunciation:
- uncertain _____
- frequently mispronounced words _____
- sometimes mispronounced _____
- never mispronounced _____

Pitch:
- uncertain _____
- too high _____
- too low _____
- monotonous _____
- varied _____
- ineffective _____
- effective _____

Rate of Delivery:
- uncertain _____
- too fast _____
- too slow _____
- not varied enough _____
- varied _____
- ineffective _____
- effective _____

Vocal Expression for Mood/Meaning:
- uncertain _____
- clear _____
- very clear _____
- predominant mood expressed _____

Facial Expression:
- uncertain _____
- wasn't used _____
- rarely used _____
- sometimes used _____
- frequently used _____
- ineffective _____
- effective _____

Body Posture/Gestures:
- uncertain _____
- weren't used _____
- rarely used _____
- sometimes used _____
- frequently used _____
- ineffective _____
- effective _____

Characterization:
- uncertain _____
- undeveloped _____
- some indication of character _____
- fully developed _____
- predominant characterization _____

Unit VII. Playing the Action

(Four Weeks)

Unit Overview

The unit on Playing the Action will provide the student with practical experience in a theatrical production. Throughout this course, students have been learning skills which will now be applied in a final activity. The student will also be introduced to an even wider vocabulary of the theatre, to the use of contributory elements in a production, and to the responsibilities of theatre personnel. An outgrowth of this experience will be the student's awareness of career opportunities in theatre.

Included in the Suggested Procedures and Activities are the following:

A. Definitions of Theatre Personnel
B. Directing Procedures
C. Use of Contributory Elements
D. Acting Guidelines

As in all other units, theatre games are recommended for use as warm-ups.

Performance Objectives

The student will:

- participate actively in all activities
- interact constructively with other students towards a common goal
- assume responsibility for an assignment that is an integral part of the accomplishment of a final project
- focus on a given task as both an audience member and an active participant
- demonstrate a knowledge of the technical vocabulary of theatre
- understand the use and effects of contributory elements in a production
- identify the roles of theatre personnel
- recognize the importance of effective vocal expression and movement in creating a character
- develop the ability to evaluate performances
- evaluate the development of her/his own progress throughout the course

Suggested Activities and Procedures

Whether the students will be performing one-act plays or scenes, the following classroom procedures are suggested:

At the outset of this unit the teacher should introduce the class to the concept of a production company. In every company, the organization and the interrelationships of the staff members create the quality of the overall product. This is true also of a theatrical production company.

With this overview in mind, the class should be introduced to the positions and the responsibilities inherent in each position of a theatrical production company, as well as to a technical vocabulary used by members of the profession. This may be done through the use of handouts followed by discussion.

After the class has a basic understanding of the production company, it is suggested that for each play or scene, an actual company be organized. To accomplish this end, the teacher may wish to use a contract system, using contracts similar to the one included in the assessment section of this unit. In organizing the company, the first job to be assigned is that of the director(s). If the class is working on one play, the teacher must decide whether he/she prefers to direct. If several one-acts or scenes are being produced, each production must have one person as director. It may be appropriate for the teacher to suggest several students who should consider directing. It should be understood by the class that accepting this responsibility does not preclude the possibility of acting. However, students must also understand that in every successful production, there must be a cooperative spirit and a sense of social responsibility. The proper attitude about compromise can further individual growth.

It is the responsibility of the director(s) to cast the play(s) or scenes. The following are suggested approaches to casting.

Production of One-Acts

The teacher and the student directors should first discuss the plays to be produced and list the roles available. Keeping in mind the number of students in the class, they should determine whether some students will have to play more than one role or whether any role should be double cast. Because the directors will already be familiar with the talents of the students, they may wish to make decisions before casting begins concerning students who are appropriate for each role. During casting, however, all students who wish to read for a part should be

allowed to do so. After the casting procedure, the teacher and directors will select the cast for each play. It is recommended that the plays be cast from the entire class so that the widest range of talent is considered for each role.

In casting a single one-act play, the same procedure should be followed. The teacher and student director, if there is one, will cast the play; however, the entire class should participate in the casting process by making their own selections and submitting their choices to the director(s) for consideration.

Production of Scenes

In casting scenes, the teacher must rely on information developed earlier in the course, and on his/her own judgement. Not all the scenes originally chosen can be produced. The students will have expressed preferences for certain roles. Now the teacher must match the students to roles, creating groups that he/she feels will be motivated to succeed. In other words, there will be no try-outs.

There are three major considerations to this casting procedure: (1) Who will work well with whom? (2) Which role(s) will afford the student the greatest opportunity for self-expression and growth? (3) What restrictions are required because of time limitations?

The scenes should be challenging and afford students the opportunity to work on specific acting skills. (See section on acting in this unit.) It may be apparent from examining a student's preferences whether the student wishes to perform major or minor roles. The teacher should decide whether this choice is appropriate to the student's abilities. A student may be given more than one role. Some students may be cast as several minor characters. Versatile actors may be challenged by two medium-sized roles or one major role. (Stanislavski said that there are no small parts, only small actors!)

After casting has been completed, each performance group will determine what other production company tasks are to be performed. Although the members of the cast will probably fill these roles, there may be a need or desire to have some of the roles filled by members of other casts. This is particularly true of lighting or sound effects people, who are needed backstage during a performance. *At this time, each student should complete his/her performance contract.*

During the course of rehearsals, the teacher — as director or assistant director — should always explain to all the students the reasons for particular decisions. Students should realize that they will be learning even if they are not on stage. This is particularly important when there is double-casting. Students having the same role must remember basic blocking and business directions, and they can profit from seeing each other's interpretations of character.

At some point, the teacher and students together will *determine the performance schedule and plan* extra rehearsal time, if necessary.

A. Glossary of Theatre Personnel

Brief descriptions of the functions of the members of a production company are provided below. The class will decide which roles will be appropriate for the purposes of the unit. This is an ideal time to invite guest speakers who can perform these jobs. Additional career-related material may be presented to students or researched by them to extend this unit.

Producer — Coordinates the "putting together" of a show — writers, directors, technicians, etc. Arranges all financing and expenses. Decides when and where production takes place.

Backer — Provides money needed for the production.

Director — Assumes primary responsibility for the success of the production. Develops a production concept and coordinates the efforts of all the production elements to develop his/her concept. Is responsible for casting and blocking, and establishing motivation of the characters to do what they do. Establishes atmosphere in which all others work.

Assistant Director — Assists director in running rehearsals, researching necessary information for production.

Business Manager — Is in charge of the funds for a production.

Stage Manager — Assists director with complete supervision of the stage during rehearsals and performance. Prepares prompt book.

Stage Crew — Shifts scenery during the show. Opens, closes curtain. Is responsible to stage manager.

Actors — Perform the dramatic roles of the play.

Set Designer — Follows instructions in the script and translates the words into models, plans, and sketches of the scenery required. Creates a functional and artistic set.

Construction Crew — Builds, paints, and sets up scenery.

Properties — Obtains, supervises the handling of, and maintains scenic and hand props as well as making nonrecorded sound effects. May be assisted by a crew.

Lighting Designer — Accentuates the action of the play by the use of colors, darkness, and brightness. Specifies the instruments to be used to light the production.

Lighting Crew — Prepares light plots, charts, and cue sheets. Hangs and focuses lights and runs them during show.

Sound and Special Effects Crew — Procures or

records necessary sound effects. Provides necessary sound effects during show.

Costume Designer — Is responsible for everything worn on stage. Designs and executes clothing requirements.

Wardrobe Supervisor — Cleans, presses, and repairs all costumes with the help of assistants. Helps actors make quick costume changes.

Dresser — Assists wardrobe supervisor. Helps actors put on costumes in dressing room before going on stage. May also assist in an emergency change.

Designer — Studies the show's requirements for character, period, and situation. Designs and provides necessary makeup, and schedules time for application.

Makeup Crew — Applies makeup to actors unless actors do it themselves.

Publicity Director — Supervises the advertising of the show.

Publicity Crew — Assists director by making and hanging posters, writing articles and announcements, mailing announcements to patrons.

Program Designer and Crew — Designs, plans, and prints programs.

Prompter — Attends every rehearsal to familiarize himself/herself with script. Writes cues, pauses, and business in prompt book. At rehearsal, cues actors who forget lines. During a performance, immediately assists actors if they need help.

House Manager — Is responsible for the seating and comfort of the audience. Supervises the ushers.

Ushers — Hand out programs and direct or escort the audience members to their seats.

B. Directing Procedures

The student who wishes to be a director should understand that he/she is responsible for the complete production. The director is both an artist who creates stage action from a written work and an executive who organizes schedules and delegates jobs. He/she guides the cast and crews, coordinating all of the theatrical elements into a unified whole. The major tasks of the director are:

Studying the script
Developing a production concept
Organizing a rehearsal schedule
Working with the actors
Working with the technicians

Studying the Script

Studying the script is an ongoing process in that it begins when the director selects the play, continues through casting and rehearsals, and ends only with the final performance. With each successive reading, the director analyzes the play in order to decide how best to convey the author's intent. The director may also do additional research to help himself/herself arrive at an understanding of the following:

- Background of the play — historical period, geographic location, dress and attitudes of the people
- Text of the play — structure (climaxes, scene divisions), mood, style (comedy, tragedy, etc.)
- Characters — their motivations and relationships to each other
- Theme
- Visual images — as suggested by the playwright

The director's understanding of these elements will grow and change as the production builds. But based upon his/her initial reactions to these elements, the director begins to develop the production concept that will unify the efforts of the crews and yet-to-be-selected cast.

Developing a Production Concept

The production concept is the director's aesthetic interpretation of the playwright's intent. After studying the script, the director develops the concept through his/her imagination. He/she determines the stage action and the use of contributory elements for the production. Some questions the director might consider are:

- Is the intent of the author dramatic, comedic, tragic, satirical, farcical?
- Should the characters play the roles seriously, tongue-in-cheek, or slapstick style?
- Should geographic location be indicated through the use of accents and realistic contributory elements, or should these be merely suggested or even omitted?
- What color scheme should be used?
- Should the use of the contributory elements be symbolic as well as functional and aesthetic?
- The answers to these and other essential questions must be applied consistently throughout the rehearsals. Ultimately, this overall concept is reflected in the finished production.

Organizing a Rehearsal Schedule

After a performance date has been set and a cast has been selected, the director must organize a rehearsal schedule. In this course, the director may begin by counting the number of class days available and by dividing the play into appropriate scenes. Then he/she must schedule the scenes for rehearsals on particular days. The director may also determine the need now or later to schedule rehearsals outside of class. The class should discuss extra rehearsal times which may be needed. Although the director must have the flexibility to revise the schedule, it is especially important that actors know the schedule at least a few days ahead of time so that they are

prepared to work on stage or on their additional projects.

The following is a standard rehearsal sequence:

• **Reading rehearsals.** The director explains the production concept to the cast. Cast members read and discuss the play in order to understand the theme, the plot development, the characters' motivations and relationships.

• **Blocking rehearsals.** The director blocks scenes one at a time either on the stage or in an area having the same dimensions that will be used in performance. The scene should always be repeated to reinforce the movements. A director may block the scenes in chronological order, or he/she may block the most difficult or most important scenes first. This may prevent the last scene, which may contain the climax of the play, from being performed without adequate rehearsal. The actors should not memorize lines before a blocking rehearsal, since the movement very often aids in the actor's interpretation of the lines. The actor should always understand the motivation for any movement given.

• **Developing rehearsals.** After a scene has been blocked, the director and actors work more on characterization. Once an actor has begun to memorize his/her part, props should be added. In a costume play, the actors may require rehearsal time to learn the constraints of a particular costume piece.

Note: It is not a good idea to block all scenes and then develop all of them. A director should never leave a scene unrehearsed for more than a few days. This applies in the polishing rehearsals as well.

• **Polishing rehearsals.** In these rehearsals, the director sits as an audience member, observing the stage action from several points of view. The director may still interrupt to point out changes to the actors and to work on the pace of the play so that it is neither too slow nor too fast. The actors should also have a chance to run through scenes without interruption, to develop a sense of continuity.

• **Technical rehearsals.** After scenery and lighting have been set, the backstage crews practice their cues without the actors being on stage. When the actors are added, only scenes which have important cues are rehearsed.

If actors can wear costumes, the directors and technicians can alter the color of the lights with any other adjustments that seem necessary. There may be several rehearsals of the entire play with the technical aspects included.

• **Dress rehearsals.** These final rehearsals, two or three in number, should be run exactly as a performance. Prior to beginning the first dress rehearsal, the cast should rehearse a curtain call. Then the cast and crews should perform from beginning to end without interruption. The director may make notes of comments or instructions to give the cast and crews at intermission and/or at the end of the rehearsal. The director may find a portable tape recorder helpful in recording these comments. If possible, a videotape recorder may also be used so that the actors can evaluate their own performances.

Working with the Actors

The director's job involves understanding the needs or the problems of the actors in the cast. He/she creates the atmosphere in which the actors will work and sets the tone for rehearsals.

The first time a director works with the actors is during casting. The director must consider several qualities of each person who is auditioning. These include the following:

Appearance
Vocal qualities
Movement qualities
Ability to take direction
Imagination
Dependability
Relationship to others being considered for parts

To assess these qualities, the director may have students read prepared scenes from the play to be produced or from other scripts. The director may also wish to use theatre games and improvised scenes to evaluate some of the qualities he/she is looking for. Casting may continue into rehearsals if the director cannot select the best people for the roles after one or two sessions.

The director must always be flexible — to change the concept of a character's appearance, to switch male and female roles, to double cast, or to have someone play two roles — in order to have the best possible cast.

During the rehearsals, the director works with actors to help them express the ideas, moods, and characterizations stated or implied in a play script. One way in which the director does this is through blocking (planning the actor's movements).

Although the actors may sometimes be encouraged to develop their own movements, the director's blocking is an important part of the unifying concept of the production. The director, from an audience member's point of view, can see the total stage picture and coordinate all movement on stage. When blocking a scene, the director must use the following guidelines:

• All important movements must be visible to the audience. The director should focus the audience's attention by use of body positions; areas and levels used; the eye focus of other characters; and the use of color and light, contrast, and reinforcement.

• All movement must be *functional.* All movements must relate something about a character or situation or they may detract from the center of

interest. Movement must also be *selective*. Too *much* movement -- even though appropriate to the character — will be distracting.

- Movements must be *timed*. Actors may sometimes need to count out steps or pauses to achieve the desired effect.
- All movements must be aesthetically pleasing. The director must consider balance and variety when creating moving stage pictures.

Working with the Technicians

The director must also communicate the concept of production to the designers of the contributory elements. It is then their job to make their designs practical and compatible with the director's concept. And the director must be sure their designs are coordinated with one another and with the production as a whole.

Technicians should attend as many rehearsals as possible and confer frequently with the director. The director must allow technicians to express their ideas, but he/she should always retain control of the production and make all final decisions.

C. Use of Contributory Elements

Contributory elements are those qualities of the theatrical performance used to give visual and auditory meaning to the playwright's words. They are both functional and aesthetic aspects of dramatic performance. For our purposes, contributory elements include sets, lighting, sound effects/music, costuming, properties, makeup, publicity, and audience reaction.

Contributory elements can be used to "contribute" to the audience's comprehension and appreciation of the play by providing information about any of the following:

- **Style** — as it relates to the play's performance style, e.g., realism, absurdism, fantasy
- **Mood** — the pervasive emotional quality communicated through the literature and performance
- **Geographic location** — where the play takes place
- **Time period** — when the play takes place

In addition to these generalized uses, contributory elements can add specific qualities which will be discussed later.

Ultimately, the responsibility for the use of contributory elements lies with the director. However, while the director retains control, the responsibility is delegated to an individual who has expert knowledge of the element. Each individual works with the director's concept of the production and translates this concept into a functional and aesthetic creation, using his/her specialized medium. His/her contribution will be further defined by script requirements, budgetary provisions, preshow preparation, time available, equipment available, and the effects of other contributory elements.

The physical limitations of the playing area, equipment available, and the effects of other contributory elements will be elaborated upon within the discussions of individual elements.

Although designers, technicians, and construction crews consult with each other during the preshow stages, their efforts are not completely coordinated until technical rehearsals. These rehearsals are usually run at least twice — first without the stage action, then with the stage action. These rehearsals make it possible to refine and coordinate the uses of contributory elements and to iron out problems before the show opens.

In the section that follows, information about each contributory element is provided and followed by suggested activities. This information is explained in the most general terms as the elements relate to professional use. The teacher may wish to supplement this information. The activities provide practical experiences in the way elements relate to this drama curriculum.

Sets

Sets refers to the physical setting up of the stage area. After the set and a model have been designed, the physical surroundings of the stage area are constructed. In addition, the design, construction, choice of color, and placement of a set must meet the special requirements dictated by the type of stage used; the safety of the performers; and scene changes, if any.

The proscenium stage is common to most schools. This is a box-like stage from which one wall has been removed to allow the audience to look in on the action. A close relative of this stage, the design of a proscenium thrust, retains the box shape but extends it into the audience. With the thrust stage, the playing area is closer to the audience, creating a more intimate feeling. The third type of stage is the arena, in which the audience surrounds the playing area, permitting the most intimate exchange between audience and performers.

Scenery must not block the sight lines of the audience. Sets built for one playing area cannot always be used on another. Four scenic devices commonly used on proscenium/proscenium thrust stages are flats, backdrops, cycloramas, and scrims. On these stages, a *flat* is the basic unit of set design. It is muslin stretched tightly over a wooden frame. A series of flats, firmly secured side-by-side, can be painted to create the illusion of walls or similar surfaces. If a play requires more than one set, flats may be "flown"; that is, they are hoisted above the playing area into the "fly space" when not in use, provided adequate space is available. Otherwise,

they may be placed in the "wing space," off-stage area left and right, or behind the back curtain which masks the back wall. *Backdrops* are large pieces of material which have been painted to establish the geographic location of the scene and which "mask" the back wall. They, too, may be flown when more than one set is required. A *cyclorama* is a solid color (usually gray) smooth-surface backdrop which masks the back wall and upon which lights or slides can be projected.

A *scrim* is gauze stretched on a wooden frame and can, through the use of lighting, be made to appear either transparent or solid. It might be used to "look through" the walls into another room.

If the play is to be performed on an arena stage, the designer may use the wooden frames of flats to suggest doors, walls, or any solid structure. This scenery does not block the sight lines of the audience.

Set pieces (three-dimensional parts of the set) are used on all three playing areas and include *stage properties* — furniture, pictures on walls, a fireplace, etc.; *set units* — steps, platforms, balconies, built up sections of the floor, trap doors; *free standing set pieces* — trees, houses, rocks.

Activities:

The purpose of the following activities is to give students guidance in set designing and set building.

Have two or three students take the dimensions of the stage in the school. Be sure to point out that the actual playing area is what they are to be concerned with and that it is not necessary to measure the wings or the backstage area.

Using the figures obtained, have each student make a floor plan of the stage to scale. Using this drawing of the stage floor plan, the students will now draw a floor plan of the set for the play. They should consider not only the placement of furniture, doors, and windows but whether the set is structurally believable.

Keeping the basic plan in mind, the students should design the set by drawing a front view of the stage as seen by the audience. Have them consider what colors should be used on walls, upholstery, drapes; whether the actors will be able to move about freely; and whether areas important to major scenes are clear and uncluttered.

Ask a student or a group of students to construct a scale model of the set in color, including furniture.

Have the class examine the materials used in the school for set construction. If there is a teacher who is usually in charge of set construction, have him/her explain construction problems to the class.

Lighting

The two properties of light are color and intensity. Through the efforts of the lighting designer and board captain (the person responsible for "running" the lights during production) these two properties are controlled in order to achieve four purposes of stage lighting:

- To provide visibility
- To provide visual emphasis for important stage action or stage elements
- To create mood
- To suggest apparent light sources (the sun, street lights, etc.)

To assist him/her with decisions about how the purposes of stage light will best be met, the designer draws what is known as a "light plot." A light plot is a diagram of the locations of the available instruments, and the colors to be used to provide the desired lighting effects.

A lighting designer first considers the needs of the area to be lit; therefore, the script is examined. The needs of the script must then be met by use of available instruments. Lighting is complex. The audience is usually unaware that a given production requires the use of a "cue sheet," a list of all changes in perhaps a hundred or more lighting instruments. Each instrument has its own purpose which relates to the "throw" of the unit — the intensity of light available, given the distance between the unit and the area to be lit. Some of the more common instruments and their uses include:

ellipsoidals — recommended for front overhead or side lighting

footlights — characteristic of old stages; rows of bulbs built into trap door units at the foot of the stage

fresnels — standard flood units, used throughout the stage

scoop light — large flood light, used to light cyclorama

spot lights — high intensity; used to follow the action, "follow spot"

strip lights — row of lights for general illumination

In addition to considering intensity, the designer must also consider color. Colors are usually produced by putting a "gel," a piece of colored plastic, into a frame which is then placed in front of the lens of the lighting instrument.

The primary colors of light are broken down into two systems because of the physical properties of light. When lighting colors are *added* together to create all other colors, the primary colors are red, green, and blue. If colors are made by *subtracting* light, primary colors are blue-green, yellow, and magenta.

Lights must be carefully hung and focused during the preshow stages. Lights that are not permanently placed are frequently attached with C-clamps from *battens* (poles hung horizontally higher than the

teasers); *balcony rails*; *light trees* (horizontal bars crossed by a vertical bar, resting on stands); *towers* (pipe structures resembling monkey bars); or a *catwalk railing* (safety railing for the narrow metal pathway built around the stage above the off-stage areas).

Theatre lights are attached by heavy cables to the *dimmer panel*, the control board for operating all instruments.

Terms common to the operation of lights include:

dim — the procedure of bringing light up to full or down all the way

fade — to move one light setting to another

fade in — to make the stage brighter

phase out — to make the stage darker

sneak — to bring the lights up slowly

full lights — to use full intensity

kill — to turn off the power

Since lighting will affect all other onstage aspects of production, it is important that choices of light sources and colors be coordinated with scenery, costuming, and properties.

Sound Effects/Music

In approaching the use of sound, the sound technician reads the script and determines the auditory needs and the aesthetic possibilities. His/her decisions are then listed on a cue sheet and work begins towards the production of desired sounds.

Sound effects records are important tools of the sound crew. Required effects are taped in the order in which they will be used. Then, on the cue sheet, the technician adds a) the number at which the tape recorder should be "cued in" to produce the sound, and b) the volume level desired for each effect. "Off-stage noises" are unrecorded effects, produced as needed.

For aesthetic purposes, music is frequently added to a script to enhance a performance. Music is sometimes used as a preshow theme, an introduction to the production. This music should be consistent with the type of play (comedy, tragedy, drama, etc.), and help establish any of the four functions common to all contributory elements (style, mood, geographic location, or time period).

Within a production, music can also be added to serve as an auditory stimulus

- to heighten or emphasize a dramatic movement
- to prepare the audience for a character's appearance
- to cue the audience to flashbacks, time distortions, or a character's reminiscing.

Activity:

Have students read a play and prepare a cue sheet for sound and musical effects. First, have students experiment, choosing sound effects recordings and producing off-stage noises. Students should make their final choices, taping those effects that need to be recorded. Second, have students select an appropriate preshow theme and/or background music. These should then be listed in cue sheet form.

Costuming

In addition to contributing to a production's style, mood, geographic location, and time period, costumes add an aesthetic quality to the production.

The costume designer begins by designing clothes appropriate to each character's needs. In a "costume plot," each costume is carefully planned and sketched. At least two drawings of the costume, from a front and a back perspective, are made. In addition the colors and details of the costume are either drawn in or described. Special features of the costumes or accessories are also drawn or described, and the dimensions of the costume and suggested fabrics or material swatches are indicated.

A character's clothes are frequently designed as a visual extension of personality. Costumes can be used as symbols of personality (formal dress, leather jackets, etc.). All costumes worn by a character should remain consistent in "line" (fashion, shape, or style of clothing) and "decoration" (trim, accessories, and jewelry). If there is not sufficient time for a complete costume change or if economy is important (as is most often the case!), costumes must sometimes be designed with interchangeable features. Finally, costumes creations should not restrict a character's movement.

Each character's costumes must also be analyzed in terms of the whole stage picture. Attention must be given to choices of colors and the textures of materials. Costumes must be aesthetically pleasing when seen *in combination* with others. Colors and materials will also appear different under the lights and against the colors and design of the set.

Activities:

Discuss with students the importance of costume, both modern and historical. Consider such things as color, appropriateness, and reinforcement of character.

Ask students to work out a complete costume plot for a play or for a character requiring several costume changes.

Properties

There are two types of properties, stage props and hand props. Stage props were previously mentioned in the discussion on scenery, since the term pertains to such units of the set as furniture, a fireplace, or a car. Stage props are "fixed" aspects of the set, meaning they are on stage serving a communal purpose. Hand props are those items carried on stage by an actor and vary from a tea service to a rake.

The properties chairperson begins his/her work with a "prop list," a listing of required props, the act and scene in which each is needed, and whether each will be on stage at the beginning of the act or carried on. Props that will be carried on are the responsibility of the prop person. They are stored in the wings and given to cast members as necessary.

In addition to meeting the four requirements of contributory elements, props can be symbolic representations of character (pocket watches, pipes, umbrellas) or necessitated by the action of the drama (telegrams, tennis racquet, knife).

Activities:

Have students work out both a hand and a stage prop list for the play.

Students should locate and obtain the needed hand and stage props.

Discuss with students the necessity of having all props consistent with the time period of the play, the setting, and the characters. Have students give examples of props which would be inconsistent with the play being worked on.

Makeup

The art of makeup requires a knowledge of what makeup is available and how makeup is applied. A makeup artist is concerned with character, the actor, the play, the stage area, and stage lighting.

Makeup may be "straight" (simple makeup required for everyday character roles) or "character" (special makeup creating special effects that range from distorted appearances to animals to witches).

A *makeup plot* is created for a specific character in a play, and then that design must be translated into reality through the application of makeup to an actor's features. The facial characteristics of the actor will influence the color and types of makeup that are used.

Makeup for the stage is specialized and includes a wide range of colors and types. Some of the larger manufacturers of stage makeup include Stein, Max Factor, Mehron, and Leichner. Color lists can be obtained from these companies.

The basic types of stage makeup included in a makeup kit are:

- *foundation* or *base* — gives a basic color to the face or other parts of the body to suggest race, physical condition, age, or environment; three types: greasepaint, pancake, liquid
- *liners* (pencils or liquid variety) — used to color the face; under the lights, features become less prominent; liners highlight areas of the face and draw attention to some, distract from others (eyes can appear larger or further apart; noses can appear broken; age lines can be added, etc.)
- *rouge* — used to suggest age and physical condition; counteracts the effect of lighting
- *eyebrow pencils* — color and highlight eyebrows
- *mascara* — darkens lashes
- *powder* — sets base

Additional supplies in a makeup kit include:

- *brushes* — used to apply makeup, and varying in thickness to facilitate detailed work
- *sponges* — used to apply some foundations
- *false hair* — used for beards, moustaches, sideburns
- *latex* — glue used to attach whiskers and to shape beards for repeated use
- *nose putty* — used to make three-dimensional changes in facial features, such as enlarged features or scars
- *cold cream* — used to remove makeup

Activities:

Discuss with the students the different purposes of stage makeup. These purposes might include makeup to compensate for lighting, makeup to suggest character, and makeup to suggest age or youth. Discuss with students the makeup problems in the play being worked on.

Display for the class the different kinds of makeup materials and explain their uses and limitations.

Demonstrate the application of makeup. This demonstration may be done by the teacher or by someone from outside the class who is proficient in makeup. Excellent resource people for the activity are senior high school drama students, drama majors from a local college or university, or members of a community theatre.

Have students choose partners and practice applying makeup on their partners. Each student should decide in advance what character he/she is and the purpose of the makeup.

Publicity

In publicizing a production, remember that the more imaginative and varied the public relations techniques used, the more effective the advertising campaign will be. The goal of the publicity chairperson and crew is to stimulate interest in seeing the play. Suggestions to promote interest include:

- *graphics* — the design, color, and execution of which will influence their effectiveness
- *announcements* — creatively written and representative of the play for use in newspapers, on TV, radio, or over the school P.A. systems
- *publicity stunts* — staged actions that seem spontaneous or out of the ordinary

The publicity agent must carefully consider the type of audience to which the play will appeal most.

One method of running a publicity campaign is to work around a thematic concept. All publicity that is generated must reinforce the theme. The more imaginative and expansive the campaign, the greater its potential. Publicity builds on the power of

suggestion. And the more frequently a play is suggested, the more likely the suggestion will appeal to a listener and translate into action: going to see the play.

Activities:

Have students design posters publicizing the play. Art students or art department personnel might be used as resource persons in matters of color and design.

Have students work out announcements to publicize the production. These announcements may be either one-minute skits, cuttings from the play's dialogue, or simply direct announcements.

Audience Reaction

The success of a production cannot be left to the judgment of the production company members. The feedback of the audience is needed to assess the effectiveness and entertainment value of a show. For that reason, audience criticism completes an important link in the communication network. Audience feedback during the performance and at the drop of the final curtain gives the production company a sense of their overall effectiveness.

The expertise of a theatre critic is also provided in mass-media reviews. His/her views will help the company assess their overall effectiveness. And, perhaps more important, the critic serves as a "gatekeeper" for the public.

A potential theatre goer's response to the recommendation of a critic is based on the critic's reasons for judgment, the individual's acceptance of that judgment, and the individual's personal preferences.

An individual who has attended a performance sometimes performs the function of critic. Often the opinion of a friend or relative is accepted in the judgment of a performance.

D. Acting Guidelines

The role of the actor in the production company is to develop a character for performance.

The actor in a theatrical company is the front man. No matter how much work and effort has been put into the production behind the scenes, if the acting isn't effective, the performance will not be well received. An effective actor must be a doer. Talent is involved but so is skillful technique. The truism "There is no better learning experience than life itself" certainly applies to acting.

To his/her part, the actor brings experiences and observations about life, and talents as an actor that have been developed through training in "stage technique." Stage techniques include all those skills emphasized in this course: concentration, self-discipline, spontaneity, creativity, sensory recall, stimulus-response, interplay, character business, voice, and body control. This section of the curriculum is written in terms of what the student must do to develop effectively a character and utilize his/her experiences and observations in a systematic process that begins with the most elementary aspects of characterization and grows into a more complex creation.

Basic Acting Project

As he/she begins to study the text, the student actor should first understand who the character is and relate this understanding to the action of the play. Components of this character will include, at the very least:

- The character's name
- His/her age
- The setting of the play or scene
- Action of the play or scene
- The theme of the play
- Relationship of the character to other characters through:
  (1) Family ties
  (2) Business relationships
  (3) Social relationships
  (4) Associations through organizations
  (5) Casual or chance relationships
- General description of the character's temperament and personality

Advanced Acting Project

Next, the student is ready to begin developing an effective characterization, beginning with an understanding of the character's motivation and ending with external aspects that reveal character.

By understanding motivation, the student develops further insight into who the character is; why he/she is doing what he/she's doing; what is happening around him/her; how and why this is happening. Motivation is the reason for a character's saying and doing what he/she does. It is the character's inner life. The creation of inner life helps the actor to understand the character. The understanding that the actor brings to the character and the play is basic to creating an effective characterization. The theatrical term given to inner life is *subtext*. How extensively the character's subtext is developed will depend upon the actor's homework; i.e., how much he/she has thought and prepared specific ideas about the character's life. In preparation, the student should fill in the details of a character's past and present life, only part of which has been given in the text. The other part is imagined but must not contradict what is given.

Students should write detailed information about each of the following:

- What are the character's mental characteristics?
- What are the predominant emotions suggested?

- What is his/her family background?
- What education did he/she have?
- Where was he/she raised? Where does he/she live now? How did he/she get there?
- What spiritual and political beliefs does he/she hold?

These answers can be incorporated into line readings, and written descriptions of physical manifestations of character should be provided. Specific ideas should be given of how character will be revealed through posture, movement and gesture, mannerisms, and voice.

Suggested Assessment

The objectives for this unit may be assessed by means of tests and a contract as well as any grades given for daily participation.

Tests may be used to assess the student's achievement in learning a theatre vocabulary, understanding the use and effects of contributory elements, and understanding the roles of theatre personnel.

The following contract system is suggested for use in this unit. In this three-section contract, each student volunteers for positions. Section I includes acting and directing positions. The teacher may wish to require all students to participate in Section I activities. Section II includes theatre company positions needed to produce the final activity. Section III includes independent projects not associated with the final production. Efforts should be made to fill all functional positions before students choose independent projects. In the event that more than one student volunteers for a functional position, the teacher must determine a method of assigning positions. Since not all of the activities are of equal difficulty, the following guidelines present reasonable equivalencies.

- Direction only
- Acting, and one three-part activity from Section II or III
- Acting, and three one-part activities from Section II or III

Production Company Contract

Directions: Read and study the following choices before committing yourself to your final activity in this class. You will be asked to select from choices of equal difficulty:

1. direction only
2. acting and one three-part activity from Section II or III
3. acting and three one-part activities from Section II or III

After the work contracted for has been completed, both you and the teacher will evaluate your work.

G=Good A=Average P= Poor

Section I	Required Alternatives	G	A	P
Directing (evaluation is doubled)	1. Organizes and conducts rehearsals			
	2. Blocks scenes			
	3. Side-coaches			
Acting	1. Stage presence			
	2. Memorization			
	3. Characterization			
Section II	**Functional Activities**			
Advanced Acting	1. Character subtext discussion (written)			
	2. Physicalization description (written)			
	3. Evidence of advanced characterization in performance			
Assistant Director	1. Running rehearsal in director's absence			
	2. Blocking some scenes			
	3. Side-coaching			

Section II	Functional Activities (continued)	G	A	P
Stage Manager	1. Completes prompt book			
	2. Coordinates effects			
	3. Maintains stage			
Properties	1. Lists props necessary			
	2. Supplies props			
	3. Sets up and maintains props			
Set	1. Makes floor plan and perspective design of stage as will be used			
	2. Obtains set pieces needed			
	3. Sets up and maintains stage			
Costumes	1. Lists characters' needs			
	2. Draws costumes for major characters			
	3. Obtains all costumes			
Lighting/ Special Effects	1. Uses script to indicate necessary effects			
	2. Provides necessary effects within limitations			
	3. Runs a technical rehearsal			
Makeup	1. Lists characters' needs			
	2. Applies makeup to characters			
	3. Maintains supplies			
Publicity	1. Makes posters			
	2. Makes programs			
	3. Writes oral announcement			
Critic	1. Designs standardized performance evaluation			
	2. Administers and tallies evaluations			
	3. Writes analysis of performance based on evaluations			
Miscellaneous	1. Writes Basic Acting Project			
	2. Stage or lighting crew			
Section III	Independent Projects — Based on Reading of Three-Act Play			
Set	1. Makes floor plan and perspective design of stage			
	2. Designs model			
	3. Builds model			
Costumes	1. Lists needs of major characters			
	2. Draws costumes			
	3. Provides material swatches			
Publicity	1. Designs posters			
	2. Designs program			
	3. Writes oral announcement			
Miscellaneous	1. Lists properties needed			
	2. Lists makeup requirements for major characters			

Student Self-Evaluation and Teacher Evaluation

	Student			Teacher		
	G	A	P	G	A	P
Casting of play						
Punctuality						
Preparation						
Attentive Behavior						
Cooperation						
Meeting of deadlines						
Completion of self-evaluation						

I, _____, agree to complete the following activities during this unit.
Name

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

_____ _____
Student's signature Teacher's signature

Today's date _____
Date due _____

Good = 3 35-39 = A
Average = 2 31-34 = B
Poor = 1 27-30 = C
23-26 = D

Note: Points for directing should be doubled. (Good = 6; Average = 4; Poor = 2.)

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Advanced study of mime showing practice in movement as related to performance.

Mime over Matter (F-6135)

Polish mime troupe creates a day in the life of a man. The troupe mimes many machines and common objects. Very inventive and delightful film.

A Workshop with David Alberts (VT 109)

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